

INSPECTION BY GENERALS RUSLING AND HAZEN.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

IN ANSWER TO

A resolution of the House of January 3, transmitting reports of inspection made by Generals Rusling and Hazen.

JANUARY 19, 1867.—Laid on the table and ordered to be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington City, January 15, 1867.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a letter from the Adjutant General of January 15, covering reports of tours of inspection made by Generals Rusling and Hazen, called for by a resolution of the House of Representatives of January 3, 1867.

Very respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

EDWIN M. STANTON,
Secretary of War.

Hon. SCHEYLER COLFAX,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, January 15, 1867.

SIR: In compliance with your instructions of the 3d instant, I have the honor to submit herewith the following papers called for by resolution of the House of Representatives of the same date:

1st. Copy of report of Brevet Major General W. B. Hazen, acting inspector general, department of the Platte, dated October 16, 1866, from the records of this office.

2d. Letter of the Acting Quartermaster General, of this date, transmitting copies of reports, as far as received, of Brevet Brigadier General James F. Rusling, inspector quartermaster's department, of inspections made by him during the past season on a tour westward from the Mississippi river to the Pacific coast.

I have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. D. TOWNSEND,
Assistant Adjutant General.

Hon. E. M. STANTON, *Secretary of War.*

QUARTERMASTER GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, D. C., January 15, 1867.

SIR: In compliance with your orders of the 3d instant, I have the honor to forward herewith copies of the official reports of Brevet Brigadier General James F. Rusling, inspector quartermaster's department, of inspections made by him during the past season on a tour westward from the Mississippi river to the Pacific coast.

Reports of his inspections as far west as Fort Boisé, Idaho Territory, have been thus far received at this office.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

D. H. RUCKER,
Acting Quartermaster Gen'l, Brevet Maj. Gen'l U. S. A.

Hon. E. M. STANTON,
Secretary of War, Washington, D. C.

REPORT OF BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES F. RUSLING.

OFFICE INSPECTOR QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, August 6, 1866.

GENERAL: I have the honor to submit the following report relating to the depot and post at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Arriving here a week ago, I have been very busily engaged ever since in looking into affairs here. The post of Leavenworth, I find, was established in 1827, but was abandoned in 1828 and then reoccupied again in 1829, since which date it has been permanently held. It consists, in brief, of 6,840 acres of land, a government reservation, of which 936 acres are woodland, lying on east side of the Missouri, and balance, 5,904 acres, are principally arable land, lying on west bank of the same river. The public buildings, consisting of offices, quarters, barracks, storehouses, stables, &c., occupy high and rolling ground near the northern end of this—the reservation extending south towards the city of Leavenworth. The ground occupied by these, including the corrals, forage yard, levee, cemetery, &c., probably comprises about one thousand acres. This is all now open and unenclosed, except a small area of some three acres in the centre of the garrison buildings proper, the parade ground, and the enclosed corrals, forage yard, &c. The two government farms on the reservation take up about twelve hundred acres more. One of these, the Bottom farm, of about five hundred acres, is only enclosed by an outside fence; the other, the Prairie farm, of about seven hundred acres, is enclosed and pretty well divided up with fences. A survey and map of the entire reservation is on file in the office of the depot quartermaster here, and he informs me that a copy has been furnished your office. Plans of all the buildings are now being made, and copies will be duly forwarded to you.

Fort Leavenworth has hitherto been a point of prime importance west, as the place of departure for all supplies required by the plains, &c. Supplies were accumulated here by the Missouri river, and then shipped west by wagon trains to Santa Fe, Denver City, Salt Lake, and all intervening posts and their dependencies. After a full and careful study of the facts while here, I am of the opinion that it must continue to be the great depot for this region. My instructions directed me to look well into this, and to report on the comparative merits of Leavenworth, Nebraska City, and Omaha, as points for departure. After an examination of the distances and other facts, and free conversation with officers here and old employes who have made the subject their study for years, I am persuaded that Nebraska City has no substantial advantages, on the whole, that Omaha and Leavenworth do not have, while they have many that Nebraska City lacks. It is true that Nebraska City is nearly one hundred miles further west than Leavenworth, but to reach it requires more than one hundred miles by river, and then you have neither public storehouses nor a railroad, while Leavenworth has both. So, too, Omaha has no public storehouses or like facilities, while everything needed is here. How well Leavenworth is equipped with these no one will imagine till he come here. There are quarters and barracks for nearly three full regiments, including the new attache barracks, as they are called. There is stabling for fully twelve hundred animals, exclusive of very extensive corrals. There are storehouses and forage-sheds in abundance, sufficient to accommodate the supplies for ten thousand men for one year, a greater number than will probably ever depend on the Missouri as a base of supplies. To this point the river is open from St. Louis usually from March 1st to December 1st, and in this time all necessary stores for a year should be accumulated here. What have been omitted may still reach here by the Union Pacific railroad from St. Louis at all seasons of

the year. From this point west, the Union Pacific road will be through to Fort Riley by September first, a distance of 152 miles, and from there will push steadily westward as fast as circumstances will allow. By this, of course, shipments may go west as fast as it is completed. My judgment, therefore, is, that Leavenworth should be maintained as the great depot for the west, wiping out St. Louis as far as practicable, and Omaha be established, as far as necessary, as a point of supplies for the posts on the Northern Pacific road. Both railroads are required to unite at a point fifty miles west of Denver by recent act of Congress, but both will have to be used up to there. The supplies for Omaha should reach there mainly by river during the boatable season, because of cheaper transportation, and should be forwarded thence by railroad as far as practicable. The same as to Leavenworth. But Leavenworth, in my judgment, should be kept as the great depot: first, because of its geographical position; and second, because of facilities already here. I think a study of the map will confirm these views. Why Nebraska City has been selected as a point for departure this year, I am unable to comprehend from what I see and hear here on the spot. It has neither storehouses nor railroads, and the difference in distance can make but little, if any, difference in the total cost, all things considered. Steps should be taken to abandon it immediately on the close of this year, and to concentrate everything at Omaha and Leavenworth, and so I recommend.

I have examined into the question of shipping the supplies from the termini of the railroads, instead of here and Omaha, and think it impracticable this season: first, because of the short distances reached by the roads thus far; second, because the bulk of supplies required have already gone forward; and third, because of the want of accommodations for supplies, as yet, at the termini of the roads. But all this should change next spring; and can, at a large saving to the government, as I think. The plan I suggest is this: to send forward a depot quartermaster and station him at the termini of each road, wherever that may be, early in the spring. Give him tents, teams, mechanics, laborers, and lumber for temporary sheds, or storehouses, and require him to push on from month to month, as the road advances, the same as depot quartermasters in the field during the war established and changed their depots. His stock on hand should never be large, but should be replenished from time to time from Leavenworth or Omaha, which he could strike by telegraph, as supplies were wanted. In other words, I would institute the same plan precisely as worked so successfully during the Atlanta campaign, when Nashville and Chattanooga were the great depots, and Dalton, Kingston, Marietta, &c., were the shipping depots, and supplied from day to day, as Sherman indicated. I see no difficulty whatever in doing this, and the saving to the government, by the constantly shortening distances over which costly wagon freights are to be paid, commends it to my judgment. To make great depots of Forts Riley and Kearney, on their respective routes, seems to me very inadvisable, for the cost of erecting the necessary buildings, &c., will be very large, and the whole will be useless as the railroad advances, when Riley and Kearney, of course, will become mere passing posts. At the junction of the two roads beyond Denver, whenever that is reached, I think a main depot should be established; also at Fort Ellsworth, on the eastern division of the Union Pacific road, where the Santa Fé route branches off. But with the exception of these two depots, both of which should be moderate, I recommend that no large depots be established on either road. The reasons are obvious, after what I have said above.

I.—OFFICERS.

I have found on duty the following officers: Colonel Joseph A. Potter, chief quartermaster of depot, in charge of disbursements, and of the great bulk of everything; Lieutenant Colonel Fred. Myers, quartermaster, headquarters of Major General Pope, commanding department of Missouri, but now absent on leave; Captain C. A. Alligood, military storekeeper in charge of clothing, camp and garrison equipage, and First Lieutenant William Mitchell, third infantry, and acting assistant quartermaster post, quartermaster proper.

I judge them all to be excellent officers; but I think Captain Alligood could be dispensed with, should his services be required elsewhere. So as to Colonel Myers, whom I recommend to be relieved immediately. I have made no inspection of his affairs, because of his absence east; but he has two clerks here, under pay, footing up some \$250 per month, as I am informed. What petty services to department headquarters he renders can surely all be performed by the depot quartermaster here, and thus the total cost of his establishment be saved to the government. The chief quartermaster of this department, as well as military division, you are aware, is Brevet Brigadier General Easton, stationed at St. Louis, Missouri; and surely he is able to conduct its affairs, in times like these, without a *fifth wheel* on the headquarters staff, the whole of whose duties must be quite inappreciable. I am not aware how Colonel Myers has drifted into this position, but I should think it very distasteful to an officer of his ability and energy.

The division of duties here into depot and post work I think very necessary. The two were merged some months ago, but they have again been separated, as I think, wisely. Some confusion and occasional conflict, as to the relative rights and duties of each, have been reported to me, and I suggest it would be well to settle the matter authoritatively by an order from your office. Existing orders are tolerably explicit, but they are old, (1859-'60,) and

IX. I recommend that a steam fire-engine be sent here immediately, and small water-works be authorized erected, as a most necessary precaution against fire; great danger here now.

X. I recommend that hoisting machinery be erected here, to lift stores from the levee to the high bluff on which the storehouses stand. Part of the machinery now here, and the establishment would pay for itself in less than a year.

XI. I recommend that Colonel Potter be supplied with full files of general orders from your office from 1861 to date.

In conclusion, I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES F. RUSLING,

Colonel and Inspector Q. M. D., and Bvt. Brig. General.

Brevet Major General M. C. MEIGS,

Quartermaster General U. S. A., Washington, D. C.

P. S.—As to orders issued while here, please find copies herewith.

J. F. R.

A true copy:

JOHN V. FUREY,

Brevet Major and A. Q. M.

OFFICE INSPECTOR QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT,

Fort Riley, Kansas, August 13, 1866.

GENERAL: I beg leave to submit the following report relating to the quartermaster's department at Fort Riley, Kansas:

This depot or post is situated on the Kansas river, at the junction of the Republican and Smoky Hill, to form the Kansas, and is reported as one hundred and thirty-three miles from Fort Leavenworth. A large amount of public money has been expended here, and in times past the post has doubtless been an important one; but with the advent of the Pacific railroad, to reach here this month, and the large influx of immigration already here, it will yearly become less so. This whole region along the Kansas, and the Republican and Smoky Hill for miles beyond, is mostly pre-empted, and is fast settling up, so much so that farms appear on every side. On these the government may already depend for large supplies, and I think had better do so, than import them from the east, on the score both of economy and good policy.

I.—OFFICERS.

The only officer here is Captain R. B. Owens, assistant quartermaster volunteers, now serving as both depot and post quartermaster. He is an officer, no doubt, of industry and integrity, but of capacity, I regret to say, unsuited to so important a position. He seems constitutionally negligent and confused, and these traits are badly apparent in all his affairs here. His storehouses are mixed up and confused, serviceable and unserviceable property being stored together, without order or system. His shops are disordered and littered up, not to say filthy. They do not seem to have been policed for weeks, if not months, and his stables and employé quarters are the worst, in point of cleanliness, that I have seen for a year past. His file of orders is scarcely mentionable, and he does not seem impressed with the necessity of having them.

His office is tolerably organized, and its condition, I am glad to say, fair. So the officer himself is industrious and hardworking enough in his way; in fact, too *hardworking* for a quartermaster, as he conceives his duty lies in that direction, of mere petty details outside, while the more important matters of organization and general supervision are neglected, of necessity. I have called his attention to the worst matters, and copies of orders given will be found herewith. But in view of all I see here I am constrained to recommend that he be relieved from duty without delay and mustered out, as unfitted for the service. I do this with regret, as he seems an officer of integrity, and no doubt does the best his peculiarities will allow. I regret this the more as I have been the recipient of many courtesies at his hands while here; but a conscientious discharge of duty leaves me no other course.

II.—CLOTHING, CAMP AND GARRISON EQUIPAGE.

The supply of these on hand is large, as will be seen by reports herewith. It foots up about one thousand suits, with variations. The quality is generally good; no complaint made. A considerable portion is in bales, which, by handling, have worn through the bale cloth; but the damage by this is small, all things considered. The present garrison here consists of one company of infantry and portions of two companies of cavalry, in all less than one hundred and fifty men. If the cavalry absent returns, the garrison will still be less than three hundred men. So that Captain Owens has, in effect, a year's supply here, and something to spare for points beyond. His unserviceable camp, clothing, and garrison equpage

is not large, but should all be sold here immediately, first, to clear his warehouses; second, because it will sell for fair rates here, judging by previous sales; third, because it will not pay to ship it east.

III.—RAIL AND RIVER TRANSPORTATION.

The Kansas, though a considerable stream, and navigated beyond here, to some extent, in former years, is nevertheless impracticable as a means of transportation, and its navigation has not been attempted of late. Besides, the Pacific railroad is now almost here, and that will absorb everything of this nature. I came over it on Friday last, from Leavenworth as far as Wamega, a station thirty-two miles east of here. That is as far as the trains now run; but it is completed as far as Manhattanville, a station sixteen miles further west, and is only waiting for a small bridge across the Blue Water there to bring the trains forward to that point. This bridge, I was assured by the railroad men, would be done by August 20, when they would at once push on to Riley, and they expect to reach here by September 1. The road is now graded to Junction City, three miles west of here, and some three miles beyond even that, and much of the rail is laid between here and Manhattanville. So a good force of men are at work on the road, though not as large as there should be; and I think we may depend on the road reaching here by September 15 at the furthest. That done, the problem of supplying Riley is solved forever, and it only remains to be considered how far it will be converted into a main depot for posts further west.

As to this I have given my views at length in report on Leavenworth, page 2 to 7, which please see. A careful consideration of the subject since, in connection with what I see here, confirms me in all I there say, and I beg to reiterate those opinions accordingly. There is nothing here to warrant a great depot, in my judgment, as the Pacific road is now going up the Smoky Hill instead of the Republican. If it went up the Republican, as originally proposed, then of course Fort Riley would be the terminal depot for New Mexico, &c.; but, as it is, Riley becomes only a passing post. The buildings are only sufficient for present exigencies, and there are no storehouses proper whatever. If others are erected the lumber in the main must be imported from the east, (Leavenworth,) or stone must be used, at a heavy cost in either case.

The transportation from here to posts beyond is now done both by contractors and Captain Owen. Captain Owen reports the contractors as doing their work very satisfactorily; yet, as he has some two hundred and thirty-two teams on hand, and no orders to dispose of them, he still uses them in forwarding freight. The bulk of the supplies called for, he says, have gone forward, but he still has some thirty thousand bushels of corn to ship, and this he proposes to send half by contractors and half by his own teams. I have directed him, verbally, to ship all he can by contractors, as I am positive it is the cheapest; but so long as the teams are on hand I apprehend work will be found for them. Some of them are now engaged in getting in wood and hay here, cut from the reserve. Others are in herd or park; but the bulk of them are on the road, between here and Fort Ellsworth, one hundred miles; Fort Larned, one hundred and forty-five miles; Fort Dodge, two hundred and forty-five miles; Pound creek, two hundred and ninety-five miles; and Fort Lyon, four hundred and ten miles. Is this economical or advisable? In my judgment it is the same bad policy as obtains in part at Fort Leavenworth, and, as there, I recommend that only sufficient be retained here for the actual local use of the depot, say twenty-five or fifty teams, and that all the remainder be disposed of at public auction as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made with the contractors. This should have been done last spring. It ought not to last after the close of this season.

I cannot learn of any supplies having been sold to contractors by Captain Owen. As to the "contracts" themselves, he thinks "fifteen days" too long notice for the contractor to have before taking freight, and I am inclined to concur with him. It must not be forgotten that this region is no longer a barren wilderness, but is filling up with people, and being overspread with a potent civilization hour by hour. Contractors, therefore, should be required to "govern themselves accordingly," and not drone on in the old-time ways.

IV.—REGULAR SUPPLIES

(a) *Fuel*.—Coal is obtained from mines near Topeka, distant seventy-five miles east, at thirty cents per bushel, and hauled here by Captain Owens. The extension of the railroad here will obviate this, as well as bring many other blessings. The amount on hand is only one hundred and thirty-three bushels; but little is used. Wood is obtained here off the government reservation, cut by quartermaster's men, and costs, Captain Owen thinks, \$7 per cord, delivered here. It is oak and cottonwood, and fair for this region. I can learn of no peat here. Coal is reported nearer than Topeka, but the owners of the mines will not reveal them, so that Topeka is the only resort yet awhile. The wood on hand foots up four hundred and fifty cords, and more is being cut to make up the winter's supply; its average distance is three and four miles.

(b) *Forage*.—No portion of the reserve is farmed, and forage is procured from citizens, partly on contract and partly in open market. I think the latter plan had for well-known reasons; but Captain Owen has authority so to purchase, from your office and General

for them. He also addressed a communication to the Adjutant General on the subject, but as yet without answer.

The public buildings consist of quarters for commandant, a tolerable house; quarters for officers, very shabby; barracks for three companies, poor; three considerable storehouses for quartermaster's and subsistence stores, all fair; a hospital for twenty men, good; good stabling for 300 or 400 animals, needing only slight repairs, and a lot of sod buildings, none of them of much account. They are located in the northwestern part of the reserve, about two miles east of Kearney City, on the reserve line, and two and a half south of the Platte. They are all of frame, mostly cottonwood, except the sod buildings above referred to. Their general condition is far from good, and the most of them need lumber and carpentering at once, to prepare them for the winter. General Wessels reports them as very bad when he assumed command here, and his quartermaster has been repairing them as fast as possible; but he has only three carpenters, and can't "make bricks without straw." Major General Pope, when here recently, ordered 100,000 feet of lumber here for general repairs: of this amount, 8,000 feet have been received. I recommend that the balance be pushed forward at once with expedition, and that carpenters be sent here to hurry up the work before winter sets in. As to the forage-house, I have already spoken on page 7, which please see. But a variety of repairs are needed here, and the necessity is immediate and urgent. Now that the railroad is completed to Kearney, I see no reason why the subject should suffer delay. None of "General Sherman's \$1,000,000" for posts on the plains has reached here yet; it should be made immediately available for lumber and mechanics here.

There is no stone for building purposes in this vicinity, and sod and adobe cannot be used this season; it is too late for them to harden. No adobe has been tried here, but sod has, with only tolerable success. The walls seem thick enough, yet after a year or so they bulge out, and will soon tumble down if not braced up; another fault is their dampness; I incline to think them worthless, except for the most common purposes; they surely will not do for storehouses. I think a lesson may be learned from the settlers here. They use log huts, but roofed with slabs, and cover these with dirt a foot or so thick. I examined many of these while en route here, and found them perfectly dry and serviceable. A little dirt has to be added once or twice a year, but this soon hardens and becomes covered with a dense growth of grass, and the inhabitants assured me it turned rain completely. The sod buildings appear first here in the valley of the Platte, but they are tumbling down wherever I have seen them; and I incline to the opinion that the cheapest and most serviceable material here at Kearney is lumber, especially as the railroad has now reached here. The shops of the quartermaster's department here, all very trifling, are made of sod, roofed with shingles, and suffice very well; as also the kitchens of the post and some other buildings. I apprehend a dirt roof would be found too heavy for the sod.

No map or drawings of the buildings exist here, nor have any been rendered to your office. I have directed Lieutenant Dibble to have maps and drawings made, both of the reservation and buildings, without delay in duplicate, one copy to be sent to you and the other retained here, as a part of the permanent records of the quartermaster's office here. I apprehend he will find a map of the reservation in the United States land office for this district, from which he can secure a copy, and I notified him accordingly.

The troops here, less than one hundred, as before stated, are all occupied with their legitimate duties, so that it will be impracticable to use them for building purposes. There is a good library here, furnished chiefly by the Sanitary Commission, and a room is used for chapel purposes. There is no chapel proper here, and I cannot recommend the erection of one under existing circumstances. The extent of the government reservation here (ten miles square) is beyond reason, in my judgment, and I recommend its reduction accordingly. I suggest that it be reduced to two sections immediately about the post, and the valuable grass and wood islands in the river, and that all the rest be thrown open to pre-emption or sale. I cannot learn that it has ever been officially declared a reservation, but presume, of course that this is so.

VII.—EMPLOYÉS.

The roll of employés foots up seventy men, August 21, at a monthly cost of \$2,905, exclusive of rations and quarters, both of which, of course, are furnished. Of these, forty teamsters will be discharged as soon as the absent train at Reno is disposed of. This will leave but thirty men, which I do not deem in excess from what I see here. They are quartered in tents and rough sod buildings, and many of them live in their wagons. Should the post be maintained permanently, something should be done in the way of quarters for employés, but there is no time for this this season. The employés struck me as a good body of men, and as kept busily engaged.

VIII.—FIRE DEPARTMENT.

No precautions whatever exist here against fires, and inflammable oils, as usual, were stored in the midst of main warehouses. So the post wood-pile was near to the storehouses, and light kindling material in considerable quantity between even this and the storehouse. I directed the immediate removal of all these. There are several wells here in daily use, but

no pumps in them. These wells are only a few feet in depth, and common iron pumps, such as are in use at Leavenworth, would render them sufficiently serviceable against fires here I think. I directed Lieutenant Dibble accordingly to make requisition for such pumps; also to distribute barrels and buckets of water among all the main buildings, storehouses, &c.

IX.—CEMETERY.

The post cemetery, perhaps a third of a mile west of the fort here, embraces about an acre. It contains some thirty graves, as nearly as can be ascertained. These have been located without system, and higgledy-piggledy, as the occasion happened. Lieutenant Dibble has recently enclosed the grounds with a substantial paling fence, and is about having this white-washed. I have instructed him verbally also to systematize the burials hereafter, and to mark each grave with headboards, &c., in accordance with existing orders. A report on this cemetery was forwarded to you by Captain Ladd, late assistant quartermaster here, as I am informed, some weeks ago.

X.—ACCOUNTS.

Lieutenant Dibble had no accounts for July, as he only entered on duty here August 1. His cash on hand August 21 footed up \$11,057 83, of which \$9,446 58 was on deposit with United States treasury at St. Louis, and balance in safe. The latter was found to be correct. He has two good office clerks, who were here with Captain Ladd, and he himself is a bright young fellow, who will soon make a quartermaster if he has a chance.

XI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

1. I have already spoken of the pontoon train here; but there is a matter connected with it that I think needs attention. Of the fourteen boats it consists of, eight are a hundred miles from here, on Loup Fork, a branch of the Platte. It appears, from what I can learn here, that some time in 1865, a Colonel Heath, of the 7th Iowa cavalry, then in command here, made a contract himself with certain Messrs. Becker & Becker that the government would furnish these boats and accompanying materials for a ferry at Loup Fork, Becker & Becker to put them down and run the ferry; to charge citizens what rates they pleased, but to pass government trains, &c., free; the government to furnish a military force sufficient to protect the bridge. It seems to be a onesided, not to say suspicious, arrangement at best, as no government trains ever pass that way, and Lieutenant Dibble and General Wessels have both spoken to me of it. I have not been able to get at a copy of the contract here, as the contractors seem to have the only one, and nobody knows where they are. The above facts I have obtained from hearsay here, but they seem to be reliable. I am impressed with the belief that the whole affair is an unauthorized use of public property, not to speak more severely of it, and I recommend that the contract be annulled, and the boats at Loup Fork sold at public auction without delay. As it is, the quartermaster here is now responsible for them, but without any control over them. The matter, I have been informed, has been reported to General Easton, but no answer received as yet.

2. There is a large amount of unserviceable and worthless property here, which I think should be condemned and sold without delay. It consists principally of wagons, &c. They stand here without shelter, shivelling and warping in the sun, and the sooner they are cleared out and the post rid of them the better, in my judgment. I recommend their disposition thus accordingly.

3. The general condition of the post is rapidly improving, thanks to the commandant and quartermaster. It seems to have been bad, as General Wessels reports it was when he came here; but it is coming up, and its police condition especially is excellent.

4. There is no file of General Orders, Quartermaster General's Office, here, and scarcely any of the orders. I recommend that full files be sent immediately.

RECAPITULATION.

I. I commend Lieutenant Dibble as an intelligent and energetic young officer, and recommend him to be continued on duty here as post quartermaster. (See pp. 1, 2.)

II. I recommend that the transportation here be reduced to ten teams and three ambulances; all surplus property to be transferred or sold. (See pp. 2, 3.)

III. I recommend that the railroad here be used to its utmost distance next season, by the establishment of shifting depots, as on military roads. (See p. 4.)

IV. I recommend that the pontoon material here be used for general purposes of the quartermaster's department, for repairs to buildings, &c. (See p. 7.)

V. I recommend that mechanics and materials be sent here immediately to erect a forage house, and make necessary repairs to other buildings, before winter sets in. (See pp. 9, 10.)

VI. I recommend that the government reservation here be reduced from ten miles square to two sections, immediately about the fort. (See p. 11.)

VII. I recommend that sufficient pumps be sent here to equip all the wells as a precaution against fires. (See p. 13.)

less. None of this eight hundred cords has yet been delivered, but it soon will be, and this, with the stock on hand, will carry the post through the winter and more.

No coal has yet been discovered in this vicinity; but peat exists to some extent. Colonel Webster has found one bed, about five acres in size and eighteen inches deep, not over a mile from the post, on the reserve here. It is not of first quality, but it will do, with some wood. He has called for a peat machine, which is now *en route* here; but he does not expect to make the deposit available this season. Next season it will be largely used. He estimates that its cost will be only about one-quarter that of wood, while it will go twice as far, thus making its use a great saving here. He thinks other beds of peat may be found, especially on the north bank of the Platte, and will push his inquiries as soon as present bed has been made available.

No wood grows for miles around here fit for fuel; indeed, I did not see a tree for fifty miles in coming here, and the country west is equally barren.

(b) *Forage*.—This consists of 56,033 bushels, chiefly corn, and no hay worth mentioning. The grain is a supply for fully fifteen months, for all animals now here, and much more, of course, if the animals are heavily reduced, as recommended on page 5. This grain, with much more, was received here last fall and winter, previous to Colonel Webster's arrival here, and cost the department, delivered here, about six dollars and seventy cents per bushel. It could be delivered here now at about four dollars per bushel, taking the rates current at Kearney and McPherson. Why it was ever sent here in such great amounts Heaven only knows; I cannot imagine. Why it has not been ordered elsewhere rather than ship fresh supplies from the Missouri, as I found to be the case at Fort McPherson, is equally mysterious to me. A considerable amount of it, some 2,600 bushels, has already spoiled, and been condemned as worthless, to be sold, &c. Another large amount, some 18,000 bushels, lies piled up under paulins, for want of something better, and has lain there all winter and summer, subject to the weather and mice, that have both made large demands upon it. Many of the sacks are wearing to pieces, and quantities of it run out on the ground every day. Colonel Webster gathers this up and feeds it to his stock, and mends the sacks as far as possible; but many of them are worn out by repeated handling. All of this corn should at once be ordered elsewhere, or, if not wanted because of ample supply at other posts, should at once be sold as surplus where it is. With proper advertisements in the Denver papers, it would bring something, whereas the great bulk of it will be lost here. The balance of the corn, about 35,433 bushels, is securely housed in two frame warehouses, and should be retained for current use and issue here. It is all apparently in good condition, but has been stored there since last fall, and needs overhauling, which would have been done ere this, had the force of employes on hand been sufficient to do it. Colonel Webster expects to do it soon.

In addition to the above corn considerable has been shipped to Fort Laramie and other points, about twenty thousand bushels; but it may be that all the posts in that region have been similarly overstocked last year. If so, some one ought to be held to a severe accountability for such reckless and gross squandering of costly public property. No grain is produced in this country, and none will be for years to come.

The hay on hand, as I have said, is small; but 1,500 tons have been contracted for, delivered here at thirty-four dollars per ton—a year's supply for all animals present at post. This is cut on the north bank of the Platte, from ten to twenty miles away, as all grass on this side near the post has been consumed by passing trains. Three mowers and two horse-rakes belonging to the quartermaster's department are allowed to the contractors. General Ingalls's letter says that hay can be put at Fort Sedgwick, as he thinks, "for twenty dollars per ton." Colonel Webster says that the bidders, who were Denver men, thought so too until they came down here, supposing the hay could be cut on the south side of the Platte near the post. But when they found they would have to go to the other side and a long distance off, they doubled their bids, and so were underbid by other parties. The contract last year was for thirty-five dollars per ton; but the contractor backed down, and the quartermaster afterwards consented to receive it at that figure twenty miles off. Subsequently, in the winter, rather than let the animals perish, seventy-five and eighty dollars per ton were paid. Nevertheless, I think the price now agreed on (thirty-four dollars per ton) too high, in view of the price paid at Fort McPherson, eight dollars and seventy-five cents per ton, and at Fort Kearney, nine dollars and seventy-five cents per ton. At both of these points it is cut on islands in the river, and has to be transported some four or five miles by the contractor. Here the distance is greater, the river worse crossing, labor dearer, and the expenses generally much heavier. Still, I am not satisfied with the great difference in the prices, and would recommend the contract to be annulled, were not the season so far advanced. As it is, a supply must be had; and as Colonel Webster insists that he has made the best bargain possible, and ought to know best, as he is here on the spot, I hesitate to do more than merely thus report the facts for your information and action. If you decide to reduce the animals here, as recommended on page 5, of course all the hay contracted for will not be wanted, and I suggest that you telegraph Colonel Webster accordingly to stop receiving hay, except enough for the then reduced number of animals. None worth mentioning has yet been received, and your telegram will be in time to save something, as the last is not to be delivered until November 1. I am not sure that I have done this contract justice. Since writing

the above I have talked with citizens here and inquired more fully into the facts, and am inclined to sustain Colonel Webster in his action.

VI.—RESERVATION, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BUILDINGS.

The reservation here is eight miles square. It was established by Special Order No. 122, headquarters district of Nebraska, 1864, subject to approval of Secretary of War; but the action of the Secretary is unknown here. It embraces both sides of the Platte, so as to secure the bottom land for grass and hay, and also covers some soft calcareous limestone, unfit for building purposes. No map has ever been sent you, though one was furnished to General Easton some months ago. I have directed one to be sent you without delay. I recommend this reservation be reduced to two miles square, for reasons stated in previous reports, reserving sufficient pasture lands.

The post proper comprises the usual parade ground, some four or five acres square, around which it is intended to place the garrison buildings, and other ground covered by various buildings, some eight or ten acres in all. I transmit herewith a report and map showing the present buildings, their dimensions, &c., and those proposed. As will be seen, the only buildings now here are three company barracks, and the usual storehouses, shops, &c., with no officers' quarters at all except two buildings erected for the quartermaster, and his office, but now occupied by the post commander and a married officer. The barracks and the last building referred to are of adobe; the storehouses are fair frame ones; the rest of the structures are sod. The roofs are all shingles except those of the sod buildings and two of the company barracks, which are dirt. Shingles are about being substituted on the company barracks, as the pitch of the roofs is too great for dirt. A hospital of adobe, capacity twenty patients, is going up, and will be completed before cold weather. Its plan provides for extension to forty patients when necessary. The present hospital is an old sod building, with leaky roof, and very unsuited for its purposes.

The barracks are sufficient for the troops now here. The storehouses are ample for all necessary supplies, though insufficient for the great redundancy now here. In this respect I have already spoken of forage, (page 10.) So I would speak of subsistence stores, of which, I am informed, there are now here fully 250,000 rations. I am aware that I am not inspecting for the commissary department; still, in discussing storehouses, I feel I am justified in reporting the great excess of subsistence here, condemned as it is by all officers at the post. The subsistence storehouses are crammed to repletion, and even then considerable is out of doors. The amount given, you will observe, is over two years' supply for three full companies, three hundred men; whereas the present garrison is less than fifty men—not over one hundred with all details in.

In the matter of quarters for officers, however, the post is woefully deficient, and extra exertions should be made to provide these before winter sets in. No blame is imputed for not providing them before, as the first thing requisite was shelter for the troops and stores. Colonel Webster has urged the matter repeatedly, as I find by his letter books, but it was only to-day that he received authority from General Easton to call on General Myers, at Omaha, for one hundred additional men to push these buildings forward. For materials he had decided on adobe, made here, with board floors and shingle roofs. I think his decision wise. I have examined sod buildings carefully from Kearney here, and am convinced that they are unfit for quarters where anything else can be had. The sod requires to be selected and cut with care; the walls, to be firm, should be at least three or four feet thick at the base, running to two feet at the top; their height must not be over five feet, or six at the furthest; the roof must be supported by stout timbers, not only along the ridge, but also about all the walls, and must project from one to two feet over the walls to protect these from the rain. To make the walls secure, they must also be plastered inside and out. If the slope of the roof is too great the dirt soon wears away, and in all cases has to be frequently replenished. Moreover the buildings are afflicted with dampness, and are infested with fleas to an extent that an eastern person can scarcely conceive of. Besides all this, they do not last more than from five to six years, after which they begin to bulge out and tumble down, and require constant repairing. Many of them have fallen to pieces at points on the road here, and I heard of several instances where persons were crushed to death by the caving in of the walls or roof.

Adobe costs somewhat more, but is better in all respects. As made here it is a sun-dried brick, sixteen inches long by eight inches wide, and four inches thick. Colonel Webster has three rude mills at work making these; the material is sand and clay, found here, in the proportion of two-thirds sand and one-third clay, mixed with water, and tempered by grinding through the mills referred to. Moulding is done by hand, and a fortnight's drying in the sun makes the adobe fit for use as brick. It is then run up into walls with mud mortar, seven feet high by two feet thick, and plastered with same inside and out. A thin coating of lime or cement on the outside will make them last for years, if not forever, in this climate, as the adobe becomes harder and harder with age. Shingle roofs are preferable to all others, and in the end cheapest, as dirt roofs require constant replenishing, and are infested by a species of boring insects that let the dirt down continually. So board floors are essential to cleanliness and comfort, and should in all cases be provided. The expense, I know, is considerable; but when officers and soldiers are stationed here—a thousand miles from civilization—in a

6. I recommend the post to be broken up and abandoned as no longer necessary. (See pp. 2 and 9.)

7. I recommend that the post commander, Major Kellogg, be instructed in his duties as to the quartermaster's department. (See p. 13.)

Copies of orders issued while here are herewith enclosed.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant.

JAMES F. RUSLING,

Brevet Brigadier General, Inspector Q. M. D.

Brevet Major General M. C. MEIGS,

Quartermaster General U. S. Army, Washington, D. C.

A true copy:

H. A. KRYER,

Brevet Major, Assistant Quartermaster.

OFFICE INSPECTOR QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT.

Denver City, Colorado, September 9, 1866.

GENERAL: I have the honor to announce my arrival here a few days ago, and beg leave to submit the following report relating to affairs of the quartermaster's department at Denver, Colorado Territory.

This post is situated eighty-five miles southwest of Fort Morgan by the stage road, and almost one hundred miles by the river road. There is no garrison here, the last troops having been ordered elsewhere in June last. Recently a company of the 17th infantry was ordered here by Major General Pope, but the order was suspended by Major General Sherman, and I see no necessity for any here hereafter. The town itself (6,000 inhabitants) and the country about, being so thickly settled, are impregnable against the Indians, and troops are more wanted elsewhere.

I.—OFFICERS.

The quartermaster on duty here is Brevet Colonel J. B. Howard, assistant quartermaster volunteers, who is also assistant commissary of subsistence. He came here in February last, and the records of his office show that he has done good service here. In March he visited Big Laramie and located Fort John Buford near there. This post he has planned with excellent judgment, and the chief buildings there he has already well under way. The main portion will be completed ere cold weather, and if his plans are carried out, the post will be all that can be wished there. During the same time he has made large reductions here and visited many of the adjacent posts within three hundred miles, and has cut down the cost of supplies at most of them very creditably. His work here at Denver, and at points controlled from here, stamp him as a practical and valuable officer, and I beg leave to commend him to your consideration accordingly.

II.—PUBLIC ANIMALS.

These consist of fifty-seven horses and three hundred and twenty-four mules. Of these, twenty-one horses and sixty mules are for use of General Sherman's party, now *en route* here from Fort Laramie, expected to-morrow. Of the balance, one four-horse team and two four-horse ambulances are held for local post use; twenty-five six-mule and nineteen four-mule teams as supply trains for outside use; the rest for contingent purposes. The supply trains are now off carrying stores to Fort John Buford, one hundred and thirty miles, and Fort Casper, three hundred and fifty miles. They have also been run to Fort Morgan, eighty-five miles; Fort Sedgwick, two hundred miles; Camp Collins, and other points. Colonel Howard is of the opinion that this work could be done much cheaper by contract, and in this I heartily concur. But as the teams were here he deemed it best to use them, as indicated, rather than let them remain idle. He agrees with me that the contract system is the true one, and I accordingly recommend that all public transportation here be reduced to one four-horse or mule team, two ambulances, and a small number of animals for contingent purposes, such as supplying a passing ambulance or wagon, and that all the rest be either sold here as surplus, or ordered elsewhere for sale or transfer, according to the necessities of the department, unless Denver be maintained as a permanent depot, as recommended hereafter. If ordered sold here, good prices will be obtained, judging by past sales here and present state of the market. Both forage and labor are very costly here, and our teams should therefore be reduced to the minimum.

III.—CLOTHING, CAMP AND GARRISON EQUIPAGE.

Of this there are about 1,500 suits of clothing here, with excess of many articles. Its condition is good; no complaints, though not up to the old regulation standard. It is securely stored, and well taken care of, and I recommend it to be retained here should Denver be kept as a depot.

IV.—QUARTERMASTER'S STORES, ETC.

The supply of these is considerable, especially in the matter of parts of wagons, horseshoes, mule-shoes, nails, &c. But the assortment is bad, many articles being wanted entirely. Should Denver be maintained as a depot, much should be sent here, and until the question is determined I recommend that present stock be held for current use and issue.

V.—RAIL AND RIVER TRANSPORTATION.

No supplies have been received here since Colonel Howard took hold. Some coal he has hauled twenty-two miles himself, and he has sent stores by his own teams to various distant points, as stated on pages 3 and 4, supplying all calls upon him. The true method is undoubtedly contract transportation by the pound, and it should be adopted everywhere on the plains as soon as practicable. The Pacific railroad is well on the way here by two routes, and everything seems awaiting its arrival. The northern route, up the Platte, Lodge Pole creek, &c., will probably pass fifty or one hundred miles north of Denver; but the southern, up the Kansas, Smoky Hill, &c., will undoubtedly strike Denver, and then pass west to meet the northern line, as provided by Congress, at some point fifty miles west of Denver. The northern road seems to be progressing most rapidly, yet it is not expected to reach its anticipated point, north of here, Fort John Buford, before late in 1869. The terminus of this road and Omaha will be the true bases of Denver and all the posts north of here, as reiterated in previous reports, until the southern line reaches Denver, which it is expected to do by January 1, 1868. Then Leavenworth will become the true base here, as the southern road is the shortest. Distance to Omaha from here, via Fort John Buford, about 780 miles. Distance to Leavenworth, via the Smoky Hill and Kansas, 625 miles. I am more than ever convinced of the practicability and propriety of establishing shifting depots at the termini of each of these roads early next season, as recommended in my report on Fort Leavenworth at length. All officers I have met concur in this opinion, and I find Colonel Howard has already recommended it, substantially, in letters to General Easton, so long ago as February 14 and 20. The reasons are so obvious, and have been repeated so often, that I forbear to state them again. The saving, I am confident, would be immense in a score of particulars, and I shall feel that my trip west has already amply paid for itself if only this one reform is instituted. Shifting depots at the termini of the railroads, to draw daily or weekly from Leavenworth and Omaha, and with contract trains to run from these to all posts—this I am convinced, is the true system for the plains for the next two or three years, and I cannot urge it too strongly upon the department.

VI.—REGULAR SUPPLIES.

(a) *Fuel*.—The amount of wood on hand is small, only thirty-eight cords. This was procured on a contract of the former quartermaster here, Captain Turnley, assistant quartermaster, and cost, delivered here, \$14 per cord. Wood is now selling here at \$9 per cord in open market, and large supplies could now be had here at about that rate. Attempts have been made to discover peat, but the article found proves a failure. Good bituminous coal, however, has been found in the mountains, twenty-two miles off, and costs there \$5 per ton. A deposit is reported only three miles off, but it is not worked yet. No anthracite has appeared yet. This coal is not first quality, having too much sulphur in it, and disintegrating rapidly when exposed to the air. Yet it burns well, and will prove valuable for supplying various posts when the railroad reaches here. But little fuel of any kind is consumed here now.

Fort Morgan is supplied with wood from here, at a cost of \$24 95 per cord, delivered there. Last year the price paid there was \$61 and \$65 per cord. Fort Sedgwick is also supplied at a cost of \$46 per cord, delivered there; last year, \$105. This contract (\$16) was made by Colonel Webster, assistant quartermaster of volunteers at Fort Sedgwick, and I do not think it could have been made cheaper here, as per my report on Fort Sedgwick, which is confirmed by my inquiries here. Nevertheless, I think it should have been made by Colonel Howard, as a matter of right and courtesy, as he is depot quartermaster here, and also as a means of keeping only one officer in the market here instead of two, in effect bidding against each other. The contract at Fort John Buford was also made by Colonel Howard for wood delivered there at \$8 97 per cord; this, however, was cut in the vicinity of the post.

(b) *Forage*.—The amount on hand foots up 498 bushels of corn and 70 tons of hay. The corn this year came from the Missouri, and cost, delivered here, \$3 24 per bushel. Colorado and Mexican corn can be bought here now for about the same figure, less original cost at the Missouri; the kernels are smaller, but the quality is good, quite as heavy to the bushel, as I found by actual weight, and the probability is that next year it will be even lower. The hay on hand cost \$35 per ton fifty-four miles off, being one of Captain Turnley's contracts; it can be put here now for \$15 per ton. The present contract at Fort Morgan is for \$12 per ton; at Fort John Buford, \$10 47 per ton; at Fort Casper, \$47 per ton. At this last post it has to be cut and hauled from twenty-five to fifty miles, which explains the difference in price. All of these contracts were let by Colonel Howard, and he deserves much credit for the way in which he has "smashed things" out here, as to both fuel and forage. In pre-

in the end secure a large saving to the government. Overlooking the whole ground, and knowing just what the Missouri river and Colorado could do, respectively, he would guide the department to the best results, and supply these posts at a figure much less than present cost. Post commanders would probably object to his contracting for their supplies, as they would prefer their own local quartermasters to do so. But when it is considered that such quartermasters are only detailed lieutenants, constantly changing, whose knowledge is necessarily local and imperfect, I think it obvious that the true policy is to place the whole general business of contracting in the hands of one able and experienced permanent quartermaster here, as recommended in my report on Denver. Future events—such as the introduction of the railroads, the change of posts, &c.—will of course modify these views; but until then, a period of some years to come, I feel persuaded that the views above expressed will be found substantially correct.

My future movements have already been indicated to you in my personal report for September, mailed yesterday.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES F. RUSLING,

Brevet Brigadier General and Inspector Q. M. D.

Brevet Major General M. C. MEIGS,

Quartermaster General United States Army.

A true copy :

JOHN V. FUREY,

Brevet Major and Assistant Quartermaster.

OFFICE INSPECTOR QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT,
Fort Bridger, U. T., October 11, 1866.

GENERAL: I have the honor to report my arrival here on the evening of the 5th instant, and beg leave to submit the following report relating to Fort Bridger, Utah Territory, in accordance with request of Lieutenant General Sherman:

This post is situated in the valley of Black's fork, a tributary of Green river, in latitude $41^{\circ} 18' 12''$, longitude $110^{\circ} 32' 23''$, four hundred and eighty miles west of Denver, Colorado Territory, and one hundred and twenty miles east of Salt Lake city. It lies in a great basin, bounded by the Rocky mountains proper on the east and the Wahsatch mountains on the west, and is the first post on this route fairly on the Pacific slope of the continent: that is, the first one, the waters adjacent to which flow to the Pacific rather than to the Atlantic. Its elevation above the sea is about 7,000 feet. Its military value consists in the fact that it commands all the eastern passes to Salt Lake valley through the Wahsatch mountains, and also the main passes to Montana and Idaho, the usual road to which branches off northwest from here. As such it has very justly been called *the key to Salt lake*. It also protects this valley, which has outlets north and south all the year round through which Indians may come and go, and against whom no troops could be sent in the winter from either the east or west, if necessary, because of the impassable condition of the mountain passes there. It was established in the spring of 1858 by General A. S. Johnston as a depot of supplies and base of operations against Salt Lake city, and has been maintained ever since, to protect the great overland route and watch the Mormons.

The Indians in the vicinity are the Shoshones or Snakes, and have long been very friendly. The post before the rebellion was built and regarded as a six-company post, but several of the buildings have been destroyed, so that its present capacity is rated at four companies. Its present garrison consists of two companies of the 1st infantry, Brevet Major A. S. Burt commanding, in all about 135 men. The duty of the quartermaster's department here is principally to supply these, there being no other dependencies, and the calls by passing troops being small.

I.—OFFICERS.

The only officer at Fort Bridger is Brevet Major Burt, who is now serving as commanding officer, adjutant, quartermaster, commissary, ordnance officer, &c. His duties are multifarious, and it is needless to say he has too much to do. He is an intelligent and efficient young officer, but has little experience in quartermaster's affairs, and should be promptly relieved of part of his duties. If able to give his whole time to the quartermaster's department, he would have enough to employ him for a year to come, and would doubtless suffice well. But I recommend that he be supplied at once with at least three subalterns—one for each company, and one to serve as quartermaster and commissary, and even then the post will have no more officers than the condition of things here actually requires. The post has been badly, not to say shamefully, abused during the past few years, and much work will be required to restore it to its former serviceable condition.

II.—PUBLIC ANIMALS.

These consist of sixty horses and one hundred and twenty-eight mules. Of these, fifteen six-mule teams are engaged in getting out a winter's supply of fuel; one two-horse team and one cart are in daily use for local post purposes, and fifty-five horses and thirty-three mules remain as surplus. Of the horses, fifty have been sent here for use of mounted infantry by order of Major General Pope. Major Burt reports them as seldom used, and thinks twenty-five would be sufficient, as they are only required to mount a party occasionally in pursuit of deserters or criminals—the Indians here giving no trouble, nor are they likely to. I concur in his opinion, and recommend that twenty-five be ordered elsewhere without delay, to mount cavalry, or sold, according to the exigencies of the department.

They are not first-class animals, but they are from fair to good, and would suffice very well for mounts in the country. Their condition otherwise is good. The winter's stock of fuel will be at the post by October 31, and after that the transportation of the post might be still further reduced, in my opinion. If it be deemed best to retain it all until spring, better prices could then be obtained. But then, at the farthest, I would recommend that the transportation be reduced to not exceeding ten six-mule teams in all, with a few surplus animals for contingent purposes. Forage is a costly article at all such posts as this, and no more animals should be kept on hand than the service actually requires.

III.—CLOTHING, CAMP AND GARRISON EQUIPAGE, QUARTERMASTER'S STORES, ETC.

The supply of clothing foots up nearly five hundred suits, with excess and deficiency of some articles. It was sent here from Camp Douglas, Salt Lake, as a year's supply for four (4) companies, and is fully a two years' supply and more, for all troops now present. Its condition is good. No complaints.

The supply of quartermaster's stores is deficient, but a twelve-months' supply left St. Louis in July, as appears by invoice already here, and is expected to arrive daily. There is no pressing want for any just now. Good storehouses, partly of log and partly of stone, shelter these supplies, and no more are needed at the post.

IV.—RAIL AND RIVER TRANSPORTATION.

The post is supplied exclusively by wagon trains from the east, on contract. No attempt has been made to supply it from the Pacific coast, and to do so is deemed impracticable by all persons I have met here. I apprehend their opinion is correct in view of the rapid advance westward of the Pacific railroad, but I reserve all expression of opinion to this until I reach Salt Lake city, where I shall investigate and report fully upon the subject.

The Pacific railroad, if it crosses the Rocky mountains by Bridger pass or the South pass, will probably run near Fort Bridger. Surveying parties have already been over all the routes here, and the probability is that the road will pass west either up Black's fork near the fort, or the Muddy, another tributary of Green river, some twelve or fifteen miles north of here. While *en route* here from Denver I met General Dodge, chief engineer of the road, at Laporte, on the Cache à Poudre, October 5th, where he was examining surveys in hand to see whether he could not get through the mountains somewhere on the line of Lodge Pole creek or the Cache à Poudre, instead of coming further north, and thus make a straighter course to Salt Lake. He said there was no doubt of his being able to get across by Bridger's pass or the South pass, but he wished to avoid the detour north and intended to pierce the mountains at once if at all practicable. Persons here, however, who know the country well, affirm that no practicable route can be found there, and that the road will have to follow Bridger's pass or the South pass, and so west, or not at all. In any event, the road will pass within a comparatively short distance of Fort Bridger. If it keeps a straight line it will pass south not over fifty or seventy-five miles from here, and a wagon road could readily be opened down the valley and through the passes to strike it somewhere there, and so avoid the heavy transit over the mountains either east or west.

The contractor on this route is Mr. Caldwell, and he does his work well. Major Burt reports two trains of subsistence stores recently received here in excellent condition. I have never met Mr. Caldwell and know nothing about him, but his work satisfies everybody on this route, and I feel it but just to commend him accordingly. Some of his trains I have met myself while on the march, and they were certainly models of transportation. No supplies are furnished him by the quartermaster's department, nor does he call for any. No transportation is furnished by stage-coach, for reasons stated in previous reports.

V.—REGULAR SUPPLIES: FUEL, FORAGE, LUMBER, ETC.

(a) *Fuel*.—The fuel on hand, as appears by reports herewith, foots up 421 cords of wood. Considerable, however, has been received since the date given in the reports, so the amount actually on hand to-day is over 500 cords. The amount on hand by October 31 will probably reach 1,000 cords, which is deemed a full winter's supply for present garrison, or even a *double issue*, which will probably be sanctioned here. This wood consists of pine, cedar, cottonwood, and quaking aspen, mostly dry and seasoned. It is found along the streams

and foot-hills, from twelve to fifteen miles southwest of here, on the government reservation, and makes good fuel. When trees die there, from fires or other cause, they do not rot, because of the purity of the air in this region, but become hard and dry, and remain for years fit for fuel. It is cut by details from the garrison principally, and hauled here by the post teams, making three trips per week. Fifteen six-mule teams are now employed on this duty, and have been for weeks past, and the bulk of the garrison have been assisting them. Only enough troops have been kept on regular duty to man two posts, and the general policing of the post, repairs to quarters, stables, &c., have all been neglected in order to get in fuel. Major Burt complains of this, and, I think, justly. The post has been sadly abused by former commands here, and one of the first necessities here now is to put it in ship-shape order. If the garrison was limited to this, I think Major Burt would soon change things very creditably. Were anything gained peculiarly by having the troops secure this fuel, the policy might be approved of, even with the present weak garrison. But I have made a careful calculation of the cost of the fuel as now put down at the fort, and find it to be not less than twelve dollars per cord, exclusive of the labor, rations, &c., of the soldiers. This is the cost, computing the expense of the transportation establishment, &c., only during the time when the teams and employes are actually engaged in cutting and hauling the wood here. To compute the total cost, you must also include the bulk of their cost all the year round, as they are kept here principally to supply the post with fuel, all other supplies being delivered here on contract. When all this is considered the cost of wood, as now delivered here, will be found to be three or four times the price per cord as given above.

Impressed with these facts, I called on W. A. Carter, (or Judge Carter, as he is called here,) the sutler of the post, and an old resident in this country, and casually asked him what he would furnish wood at the post for. He answered, on reflection, at not exceeding ten dollars per cord delivered here.

Last year he had taken the contract at fifteen dollars per cord; but labor, provisions, &c., were higher then than now, and he would be willing to deliver at ten dollars as above. I apprehend his statement may be relied on, as he seems and is reputed to be a man of character, and, as a matter of economy only, apart from all other considerations, I recommend that the post be supplied hereafter with fuel on contract. If this is done, the transportation may be reduced here to not exceeding five teams, and the employes to none. The petty expeditions that go out from here never require over a team or two; and should larger ones require more, teams might readily be forwarded from other points to meet the emergency, or even hired on a pinch. If economy is an object, this is surely the better plan.

Bituminous coal of an excellent quality is found in all this region. It is the one compensation that nature gives to apologize for the desolation and dreariness of the "Bitter Creek country," where the earth seems cursed by alkali and sage-brush. In the vicinity of Fort Bridger there are several very fine deposits. The nearest is on Smith's fork of the Green river, some twelve miles south from the post, on the reservation. Judge Carter offers to work this, and to put coal down at the fort at twenty-five cents per bushel, which I apprehend would be found a cheaper fuel than wood at ten dollars per cord. It would involve the cost of grates or stoves, but this would be small. In addition to this deposit, there is another, on the Muddy, fifteen miles north of the post; another on Sulphur creek, on the Chalk Creek road to Salt Lake, twenty-six miles west; another on Ham's fork, thirty-five miles northeast; and others further off. The one on Sulphur creek has been reserved for use of the post, and is probably very rich. But it is too far off, and I recommend that the deposit on Smith's fork be used instead. None of these deposits have been fairly opened, but there is no doubt of their value. Coal has been obtained from them by the troops when encamped in their vicinity, and found to burn readily, even on such rude grates as could be formed by stones, horseshoes, wagon tires, &c.

Petroleum also exists at various points twenty and thirty miles away; but this will scarcely come into use as fuel at Bridger soon, though I would suggest that it might be introduced profitably at some of the posts on the plains where wood is now so costly.

With the petroleum stoves now used in eastern cities the cooking for the troops in the summer at least would cost scarcely anything compared with wood, and the period is not distant when it will be used extensively by all settlements on the plains.

(b) *Forage.*—The supply of grain on hand consists of only four hundred and twenty-eight bushels of oats. No corn has been used at the post for some time. A twelve-month's supply of oats has been contracted for to be delivered by October 15, but little has reached here as yet, and there is no probability of the contract being filled on time. This contract was made by Captain Grimes, assistant quartermaster at Camp Douglas, with a Mr. Halsey, at Salt Lake, for oats delivered here at \$1 per bushel; last year the contract price was \$4 25 per bushel. It is important that the post be supplied at once, as winter will soon be here, when the mountain passes will become dangerous, if not impracticable. I will see Captain Grimes about this when I arrive at Salt Lake, and see that a proper supply is pushed forward at once. The stock on hand is loose oats, quite dirty, that the contractor has borrowed from the sutler here, Judge Carter, to prevent the post running entirely out. I apprehend he will be compelled to fall back on Judge Carter entirely, or fail in his contract altogether. The oats on hand need thorough winnowing and sacking to be serviceable, and I have instructed Major Burt accordingly. For some years past the post has been supplied with grain chiefly from Salt

Lake or this vicinity. Corn is not obtainable; but oats and barley of an excellent quality are grown both there and here, and can be put down at the post at rates far less than corn from the Missouri. I think the policy a good one, and recommend its continuance.

The hay on hand consists of about one hundred and eighty tons, and may be regarded as a season's supply. It is of an excellent quality, and was delivered here on contract, at a cost of \$35 per ton. Last year's supply cost \$40 per ton. It was cut on the reservation, ten or twelve miles off, on bottoms that produce two and three tons per acre irrigation. I think the price (\$35 per ton) too high, and see no reason why it should not be put down here at not exceeding \$20 or \$25 per ton at the farthest. As to this more at length.

(c) *Lumber*.—But little lumber is used here. A small supply is on hand which was obtained from Salt Lake city, and put down here at a cost of \$110 per thousand. Shingles obtained in the same way cost \$30 per thousand; and very inferior laths \$25 per thousand. The contract for these was made by Captain Grimes at Camp Douglas, and I suppose was the best he could do at the time. But recently Judge Carter has imported a saw-mill, shingle-machine, &c., from the States, and says he is now ready to furnish lumber here at not exceeding \$50 per thousand; shingles, \$20; laths, \$12. As there is no saw-mill nearer than Salt Lake, I apprehend he is safe in offering those figures, and will make handsome profits even then, as there is plenty of good timber within twelve or fifteen miles of the fort.

VI.—RESERVATION—PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BUILDINGS.

The reservation here at the post is a tract of land twenty-five miles north and south, by twenty miles east and west, embracing the best and most of the valley bordering on Black's and Smith's forks of Green river. It was established in 1858, and has probably been officially declared by the government, though no record of this appears here. There is no map of the reservation here, but one is said to be on file in Washington, in either the Adjutant General's office or the Bureau of Topographical Engineers, it is not known which. A map is on file in the quartermaster's office, and a copy was forwarded to you September 5, through General Easton, by Captain Harding, the preceding quartermaster here, as I am informed. I have given no orders about forwarding a map of the reservation because of a letter on file here from General Easton, in which he says he has now two draughtsmen *en route* to Post West, in this military division, for the purpose of making maps, &c. Copies, I presume, will be furnished you by him. The large extent of this reservation was caused, I hear, by a desire at the time to exclude the Mormons from the vicinity of the fort, and confine them, as far as practicable, to Salt Lake valley. As a military measure this was wise, while they were hostile; but as an economic measure, in view of the post here, it has ceased to be judicious. Were the valley here settled up, or even partially settled, the post could be maintained at a fraction of its present cost.

Yesterday I examined both valleys for a distance of ten or twelve miles about the post, and was amazed at their extent and fertility. The valleys run nearly north and south, and are rimmed on the east and west by high, sterile bluffs. They average twenty-five miles in length, by ten or twelve miles in combined width here at the fort. The streams (Black's and Smith's forks) divide and subdivide into many others a few miles above the fork, and then rejoin some distance below. They contain sufficient water to irrigate not only their own wide bottoms, but also the higher plateaus between them, thus making in all a breadth of ten or twelve miles, as I have said. These bottoms now produce grass of the finest quality, and, by irrigation, also produce oats, barley, wheat, rye, buckwheat, &c. Corn, however, cannot be grown, as the elevation above the sea is too great; and yet in all this region of such great advantages, and boundless fertility, there is not a single settlement, and the post looks for its supplies in the main, from the Missouri or Salt Lake valley, when almost everything might be produced here, and would be, were the land open to settlement.

The only cultivation or farming done is by the sutler, Judge Carter. He has a lease from the Secretary of War for all grass and tillable lands on the reservation, for two years from January 1, 1866, subject to revocation at any time, giving him the exclusive control of all such portions of the reservation, with the sole condition that all the hay and grain he raises shall be subject to purchase by the government here, should the post desire it. No limitation is fixed as to price, except such as may be agreed on from time to time, when the purchases are made, by contract or otherwise. He says his usual prices have been those current in Salt Lake, plus the cost of transportation here. The result is, his lease gives him a monopoly of grain and hay here, and he cannot help but underbid every other contract, if he at all tries to. This, because nobody else is allowed to use these rich valley lands, to cut hay or otherwise, and also because labor, provisions, &c., must be at least as cheap as, if not cheaper than, they are at Salt Lake. This year he has about three hundred acres under cultivation, and he has cut about four hundred acres of hay. The products are large, and have been for some years past. Were they all to go to the government, at fair rates, it would not be so invidious. But there is reason for reporting that but comparatively a small portion reaches our storehouses. In conversation while here I have endeavored to elicit about how much has been supplied to the government, and how much disposed of otherwise; but the judge, with a shrewdness that does him credit as a business man, has artfully avoided all my questions, and about the only information I can get is, that "some has been supplied to

the post and some has not; could not exactly tell how much." To satisfy myself, I yesterday visited the portions he is farming, and found them on Smith's fork, at a distance of seven and twelve miles respectively from the fort. He there has several hundred head of cattle, mules, horses, &c., and has in his employ there and here about 100 persons. All these are supported on the reservation, and he is allowed to cut wood, use stores, &c., *ad libitum*. He has hundreds of tons of hay, if not thousands, now in stack there, and his grain this year will probably foot up into many thousands of bushels. As the post is already supplied, or contracts have been made to supply it otherwise, all of his surplus will either be consumed by Mr. Carter, or disposed of to passing trains at enormous figures. My conclusion, from all I see here, is, that the government has never received one-third of the products of his farming, while at the same time it is bound in the lease to protect him against all trespassers, and, by committing all "grass and tillable lands" to him, has been compelled to pay one-half more for its hay and grain than it would have paid had the reservation been thrown open to settlement, or had other contractors been allowed to cut hay on the portions he does not use, of which there are thousands of very valuable acres. As it stands now, Judge Carter has a monopoly of all the good lands here, and confers upon the government no corresponding benefit whatever. At the least he should furnish supplies here at Salt Lake rates, less the cost of transportation here, because he can raise them certainly as cheap here as they can there, having neither money invested in the land nor rent to pay for use of the same. His plea that he has been induced to invest large sums of money in bringing agricultural implements here and starting the enterprise, and that he should be allowed his privileges until he can reimburse himself, I am unable to indorse. He came here poor in 1857, as I am informed, and is now reported worth over \$200,000. He has two stores in this country, at which he sold last year over \$150,000 worth of goods, as he informs me, at not less than fifty per cent. profit, and I apprehend his books would show that he has already reimbursed himself from his farms several times over. I regret that I find it to be my duty to report these facts; but I know only my duty as inspector, and I see no reason why Mr. Carter should be allowed these handsome privileges at the expense of the government over other citizens equally worthy, no matter how excellent a man he may be, or how polite he has been to me personally. His knowledge of this country is already a fortune in itself, and he should be content with past gains, without desiring to continue his extraordinary monopoly of the reservation lands here. Hundreds of immigrants would have been, and would only be, too glad to make the same investments of "money and implements," and ask no return from the government whatever.

In view of these facts, I accordingly recommend that Judge Carter's lease of the public lands here be revoked from and after December 31, 1866, and that the greater part of the reservation be thrown open to settlement. An area two miles square, about the flag-staff, would be ample for all post purposes here. Sufficient of this should be at once enclosed to produce all hay and pasturage required by the post. Now all the bottoms near the post are cramped over by passing trains, and the grass eaten off close to the soil. A sufficient enclosure could be made at small expense, timber is so plentiful here, and hay furnished from this to the post on contract at not exceeding \$5 or \$10 per ton, instead of \$35 or \$40 as now. The saving in a year or two would thus pay for the work. The valleys would settle up very quickly, and the post would be supplied with almost everything except coffee, sugar, tea, &c., at rates 25 or 50 per cent. less than present cost. Should the settlement be principally Mormon even, the advent of the Pacific railroad will soon neutralize and overcome all that, as a strong and constantly swelling tide of immigration is sure to follow in its track.

The post proper consists of a quadrangular enclosure about the flag-staff, after the usual manner of our western posts, some five or six miles in extent. The barracks are located on the north and south sides of the quadrangle, the officers' quarters on the east, the storehouses, shops, &c., on the west. Near the centre of the parade ground, from south to north, runs a branch of Black's fork, which abounds in trout, and adds greatly to the beauty as well as comfort of the post. Other branches form a perfect net-work of trout streams about the post, though some of them have been shamefully obstructed by former commands here. All of these streams can be used for irrigation purposes, and it is surprising that advantage has not been taken to plant trees about the post and make it a perfect elysium. This work should be begun at once, as the cost will be trifling. Formerly all of these streams were well bridged, where necessary, as the great overland road passes directly across them in its way over the reservation; but many of these have fallen into decay, making the passage of the streams difficult, if not dangerous, in winter. Some of them were even torn down and used for firewood by some of the volunteer troops during the rebellion, who seem to have acted more like Vandals than soldiers, not only here, but at other posts on the plains that I have inspected. No blame for this attaches to the command now here, who seem to be endeavoring to repair the damages of former troops. The bridges I have directed to be rebuilt without delay, before winter sets in. The capacity of the barracks I have stated as at four companies, with sufficient hospitals, storehouses, &c. There is also stabling for 142 animals, and sufficient for 70 more will soon be ready. The stables are of frame, with shingle roofs, of good materials, but indifferently constructed. One of them collapsed some weeks ago after a wind storm, the frame-work being too light. But it can readily be repaired and made to do good service again. With a little expense the stables may be regarded as from fair to good. A

report of all these buildings, giving dimensions, &c., is herewith. Of course there are no private buildings at the post.

The quarters, barracks, storehouses, &c., are built of logs, with board floors and shingle roofs. They are all chinked with mortar on the outside, and the officers' quarters are also lathed and plastered inside. The buildings have been placed on the surface of the ground, with no foundations, and as a consequence are yearly injured somewhat by the frost; but this is slight, as the frost here seldom penetrates over six or eight inches, as Judge Carter informs me. With the exception of some floors that need replacing, the buildings are all good and serviceable—roofs tight, walls sound, &c.—and they will last for years yet, with slight repairs from time to time. I passed through and personally inspected the whole of them, and did not see a decayed or rotten log in any of them. There is nothing in this atmosphere to make logs rot or buildings decay, and the post, as it stands, is sufficient, in my judgment, for all future wants of the government for the period it will probably be maintained. The Pacific railroad will reach this region and pass westward by 1870 at the farthest. The year it passes here, all necessity for a military post will cease. The road will carry with it, *pari passu*, a vigorous and energetic population, that will everywhere press back the Indians and be amply able to protect itself. Military posts on the line will at once cease to be essential, and will everywhere be broken up and withdrawn to more necessary points in the regions north and south of that road.

Should it be thought proper, however, to maintain Fort Bridger as a permanent post, as the key to Salt Lake valley, it would be well to replace all the buildings here with substantial stone structures. Building-stone of excellent quality abounds on the reservation, at a distance of two miles from the flagstaff, and the alkali soil in the bluffs will suffice for mortar, without any admixture of lime even. The stone is a whitish, yellowish limestone, silicious in its character, the seams of which open readily without blasting, and but little if any dressing will be necessary to fit it for building purposes. Judge Carter has used it in the erection of his storehouses, &c., here, and though soft in the quarries, it hardens well on exposure to the atmosphere. It resembles the stone found at Fort Riley, Kansas, of which the post there is built, but has more silica in its composition, and can be worked more easily.

Buildings erected of this will stand for a century here or more, and the first cost will be but little if any greater than logs or lumber. All the bluffs and buttes around the post are filled with this stone, so that the supply may be regarded as inexhaustible. What lime might be necessary for plastering, &c., could readily be manufactured here, either wood or coal being present for fuel. I have made a rough calculation of rebuilding the post, and would report it at not less than \$150,000, quarters, barracks, storehouses, stables, &c., included. I understand that plans, estimates, &c., have been forwarded by Captain Grimes, assistant quartermaster at Salt Lake, chief quartermaster of this district, but I am unable to learn here what his figures are. I regard the whole, however, as a useless expenditure of public funds, unless Bridger is to be maintained permanently, and beg leave to recommend against it accordingly. The prime mover in this project of rebuilding the post seems to be Judge Carter, the sutler. Of course, being here on the ground, with the extraordinary monopolies he possesses, he would be the chief contractor for everything, and when the post is abandoned, he simply would have a handsome village built here to his hands, which he would probably secure for a mere song. I do not blame him for desiring thus to enrich himself, if allowed to. But I give the facts, that his statements may be duly weighed at Washington, and his plausibilities guarded against accordingly. I am positive that he has "inspired" most if not all the reports on this subject, made from this region, and refer to Captain Grimes particularly, the mass of whose facts were derived from Judge Carter, as he (Judge C.) himself has admitted to me. There is no chapel or reading-room at the post, nor any chaplain. One of the vacant buildings is now fitted up as a rough theatre, and Major Burt deserves commendation for thus trying to interest and amuse his men at odd hours. Should the post be rebuilt, a chapel should be provided. While the garrison remains as small as it is, some one of the vacant buildings might be used for this purpose, should a chaplain be sent here.

As already intimated, the post has suffered shamefully from previous commands. Its present condition is far from creditable; but Major Burt is doing the best he can with the force at his disposal, and evidences of improvement are everywhere apparent. I have no doubt he will speedily reform various matters here in the way of repairs, policing, and general cleaning up of the post, as soon as his winter's supply of fuel is secured.

VII.—EMPLOYÉES.

The roll of employé's foots up eleven men, at a monthly cost of \$710, exclusive of quarters and rations, both of which are allowed. They are not in excess of present wants here. In addition, the bulk of the garrison has long been employed on extra duty, though no reports of this have been rendered. I directed such reports to be made out and forwarded, without delay, from after July 1st, as that will cover all the time for which extra-duty pay is allowed. Should the transportation be reduced, as recommended on page 3, the employé's might all be discharged, except say one clerk, and the roll of extra duty men reduced to a very few. The saving would be considerable in this item alone.

VIII.—CEMETERY

The post burial ground here is located north of the post, on the bank of the stream, about one-eighth of a mile from the flag-staff. In it are now sixty-three graves, mostly soldiers, though some are citizens. It is enclosed by a rude fence of one rail, now partly broken down, and a few irregular headboards stand at some of the graves. The location is bad, as the creek sometimes overflows, and in wet weather decent interments are impracticable; because water appears at a couple of feet or so in depth. Reports on this burial ground were forwarded to you in April and June last, as I learn here; but they were defective, as they embraced only the graves there, not all pertaining to the post. In addition, there are a large number of graves, within an area of ten miles, of soldiers and others, who perished in the Utah campaign of 1857-'58. About two miles northwest from the post is a small collection of these, numbering twenty or thirty graves. An officer is buried a half mile or so up the creek, south of the fort. Old Camp Scott, where the bulk of the army was then encamped, lies a mile or two south of the fort, and doubtless there are many graves in its vicinity. Considering all these facts, I directed Major Burt to select a suitable piece of ground on the elevated bench or plateau southwest of the post, about a quarter of a mile distant, and to enclose enough of it with a substantial stone wall to accommodate all the graves that could be discovered or adjacent to the post. Further, to remove all the graves to this, to erect uniform headboards, open a careful record, &c., as prescribed by existing orders from your office.

The stone wall will cost but little, because of the quarries here, and the soldiers can do the work at their leisure. If the post be maintained, such a cemetery is essential; if it be abandoned, the government certainly desires to permanently protect and care for its dead.

IX.—FIRE DEPARTMENT.

But few precautions against fire are needed here; the post is so thoroughly surrounded by everflowing streams. Inflammable oils, however, I directed to be stored separately, and buckets of water to be placed through the main storehouses, &c. I apprehend no danger from this source.

X.—ACCOUNTS.

The accounts of Major Burt had been rendered for September, and in the main were correct. He makes no disbursements, except to employes. His cash on hand was \$434 50; counted and found exact. He has no safe for his funds, but at present keeps them in the safe of the Overland Stage Company. This is bad, for obvious reasons, and I recommend that a small safe be sent here at once, for the proper keeping of such public funds as may come into his hands as quartermaster, commissary, &c.

XI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

The file of the Quartermaster General's orders at the post is very defective; but few have been received for 1866, or else they have been taken away by preceding officers. I recommend that full files be sent here for 1866, and those for other years also, as far back as practicable. A quartermaster can no more do his work intelligently without full files of existing orders than a lawyer without his current law books.

RECAPITULATION.

I. I commend Major Burt as an intelligent and efficient officer; but recommend that at least three other officers be sent to Fort Bridger without delay.

II. I recommend that the public animals here be largely reduced, by sale or transfer, next spring at the furthest.

III. I recommend that the post be hereafter supplied with fuel on contract, as the cheapest and best plan, all things considered. Coal should be largely used hereafter.

IV. I recommend that the reservation be reduced to not exceeding two miles square from the flag-staff, and that sufficient of the bottom lands on this be roughly enclosed to supply pasturage and hay.

V. I recommend that Judge Carter's lease of the grass and tillable lands on the reservation, giving him special privileges of great value, to the exclusion of other persons, without any corresponding benefits to the government, but rather to its serious loss, be revoked from and after December 31, 1866.

VI. I recommend that the present post buildings be continued as they are for the short period Fort Bridger will probably be maintained, and that no new buildings, of stone or otherwise, be erected for the present. To rebuild the post would be a wanton waste of public funds, in my judgment.

VII. I recommend the employes be reduced to one clerk, should the public animals be reduced as recommended.

VIII. I recommend a small iron safe be sent here for the security of the public funds.

IX. I recommend the post be supplied with full files of General Orders from your office.

Copies of orders issued while here are herewith.

In conclusion, I beg leave to repeat my regret that I have felt compelled to remark on Judge Carter as I have in previous pages. In nothing that I there say would I reflect on the man's character or integrity. He has treated me with great urbanity while here, and Major Burt certifies to his uniform politeness and good conduct. But as an inspector of the quartermaster's department, on official duty, I must forego all personal considerations, and cannot forbear to give my impressions and report facts as I find them. It is not a pleasant duty to criticise a person holding the positions and influence he does—as sutler, probate judge, postmaster, special agent of the Post Office Department, &c. But he seems to have gotten hold of Fort Bridger and its appurtenances as his special monopoly, and I should be false to my sense of duty if I hesitated to lie the facts before you as they strike me. His power at Fort Bridger is universally commented on, and is the wonder of the country from Fort Leavenworth here.

I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAS. F. RUSLING,

Brevet Brigadier General and Inspector Q. M. D.

Brevet Major General M. C. MEIGS,

Quartermaster General U. S. Army.

A true copy:

JOHN V. FUREY,

Brevet Major and A. Q. M.

OFFICE INSPECTOR QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT,

Camp Douglas, Utah Ter., November 5, 1866.

GENERAL: As I wrote you October 19, I reached here October 13, but was taken ill next day, and have been unfit for duty until the last few days. Since getting up again, however, I have inspected this post, and now beg leave to submit the following report relating to Camp Douglas, Utah Territory.

This post is situated 120 miles west of Fort Bridger, in Great Salt Lake valley, and about 850 miles east of San Francisco, following the usual line of travel. It lies on a high plateau, at the foot of the Wahsatch range, overlooking the city of Great Salt Lake, which is about three miles west of it. The post is supposed to command the city, but the garrison is wholly insufficient for that purpose, consisting of only three small companies of the 18th infantry, in all less than 200 men, Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Lewis commanding.

The post can be of no use for any other purpose, as no Indian hostilities are reported near here, and no Indians worth mentioning. The duty of the quartermaster's department is to supply the post only, there being no other dependencies.

I.—OFFICERS.

The officer in charge here is Brevet Major E. B. Grimes, assistant quartermaster United States army, also acting commissary of subsistence. He was sent here last February, and relieved Captain Stover, assistant quartermaster volunteers, then on duty here. He seems to have had a rough time of it, at first; but he has succeeded in reducing affairs to a good shape, and deserves much commendation for the work he has done here. He is a capable, energetic officer, who attends to business closely, and is fit for much larger duties than he has to perform here. In addition to his duties here, he has also a supervisory control of Fort Bridger, and both there and here he has succeeded in cutting down the cost of supplies very materially since taking hold. I recommend his continuance here, especially if the troops in Utah are to be increased, unless a practical hard-working officer is imperatively required elsewhere.

II.—PUBLIC ANIMALS.

These consist of five hundred and thirty-four animals, of which one hundred and seventy-two are horses and the balance mules. A few of each are reported as unserviceable, but their chief defect is sorebacks, which will soon heal. Of the horses one hundred are held here for mounting infantry, if ever necessary, for use against the Indians, &c., by order of Major General Pope. This order reached here during the summer, but no mounts have been called for, except to pursue an occasional deserter, and I recommend that the number be reduced to twenty-five without delay. The balance are in good condition and might be used to mount cavalry; otherwise they should be disposed of early in the spring. In daily use at the post I found four six-mule teams, four two-horse wagons, two one-horse carts, and three four horse ambulances. As all supplies are contracted for, delivered here, these teams are employed chiefly in hauling stone and doing other necessary work about the new buildings now going up here. The number is not in excess, except in the matter of ambulances, which should be reduced to two, one four-horse for distant trips, and one two-horse for local use. But over and above these animals there is a large excess here, which should be disposed of early in the spring. In addition to the 100 horses already spoken of, there are seventy-two others, which (except those used in teams and ambulances) are seldom used, except for improper

purposes, such as allowing soldiers, employés, &c., to ride them down town and elsewhere. The improper use comes, of course, from the surplus number, and would end with the disappearance of them. So, also, there are three hundred and twenty-six mules, none of which are needed or are in use here. I found these, with fifteen herders in charge, on the government reservation in Rush valley, forty miles southwest from here. It was proposed to winter them there, feeding one-half rations of grain and full rations of hay. At a moderate calculation the cost to the government would have been not less than \$30,000. I suggested, why not do as the settlers do here with their surplus animals in the winter time, namely, send them among the cañons to graze and feed nothing? On inquiry, it was concluded to do so, and the animals were hurried off last week to Henry's fork of Green river, one hundred and thirty miles distant, where I am assured they will winter in safety. The surplus animals of Fort Bridger will be added to them, and thus a handsome sum will be saved to the quartermaster's department, the only expense being the cost of the herders. This Henry's fork has long been the favorite wintering place for all surplus stock in this region. The freighters send their cattle and mules there, and I am informed stock comes off the fork in the spring fat and hearty as if kept on hay and grain. I would advise the immediate sale of all surplus animals; only I think it would pay better to keep them until spring, when prices will be much higher. But in the spring, at the furthest, I recommend the transportation here to be reduced to not exceeding ten six-mule teams, two two-horse teams, two carts, and two ambulances, with twenty-five horses for mounting infantry, and a few surplus horses and mules to meet contingencies, and that all the rest be either ordered elsewhere, if needed, or sold here without delay, unless the garrison be increased. With forage at the prices ruling here, it is preposterous to keep five hundred and thirty-four animals to supply less than two hundred men, when everything used is contracted for put down at the post. Major Grimes does not seem reasonable for this excess, as the animals have accumulated and been retained here by orders from his superior officers, as he informs me. But the matter calls for speedy reform, and I recommend this heavy reduction accordingly.

There is good stabling at the post, recently erected, for one hundred and four animals, and a rough corral sufficient for two hundred more.

III.—CLOTHING, CAMP AND GARRISON EQUIPAGE.

The supply is very large for present wants of post, as will be seen by report herewith. It foots up nearly 6,000 suits, with excess and deficiency of some articles. This amount was received here last fall and spring, on estimates of Captain Stover, former quartermaster here, who called for supplies on a basis of 5,000 troops here, as I am informed—hence the excess. It is in good condition, and tolerably housed in temporary warehouses; but Major Grimes is about completing a new frame warehouse one hundred feet long by fifty wide, and fourteen high, that will store it all well. I therefore recommend its retention here for current use and issue here and at Fort Bridger, which was stocked this year from this over-supply. Some deficiencies have been called for on Major Grimes's estimates for this year, but they are small.

IV.—QUARTERMASTER'S STORES, MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION, ETC.

Except in the matter of harness, wagons, and some other articles, there is a great deficiency in nearly all kinds of property of this sort. Of iron and hardware especially the post is almost entirely out. The supply on hand is so small as scarcely to be mentionable, as will be seen by reports herewith. Unless a good stock reaches here by December 1, or about that time, it will not get here at all this season, and the post will be compelled to supply itself from dealers here, at a cost of from five to twenty-five per cent. above government prices for such articles as can be had here, and many articles cannot be had at all. Major Grimes does not seem in fault for this state of affairs, as his letter-book shows that, so long ago as April 28, he forwarded estimates for a year's supply for four companies and two hundred and fifty animals to Colonel Maynadier, at Fort Laramie, then commanding west sub-district of Nebraska, including this post; also to Major General Dodge, at Leavenworth, then commanding the department of Kansas and the plains; and also to Brevet Brigadier General Easton, at St. Louis, then chief quartermaster of this military division. On these estimates, September 26, he received a very small consignment, consisting of tire iron, gunny sacks, wood stirrups, wagon sheets, and ambulance whips—none of which were much needed—that left Fort Leavenworth June 15, scattered through a subsistence train. Nothing has been received here since, except invoices dated as follows: one from Captain John L. Woods, assistant quartermaster, St. Louis, Missouri, June 13; another from Brevet Colonel G. P. Webster, assistant quartermaster, St. Louis, Missouri, June 26; another from Captain John L. Woods, assistant quartermaster St. Louis, Missouri, July 3; another from same, July 18; another from same, July 31; another from same, August 31; another from Brevet Brigadier General Potter, Fort Leavenworth, September 18; another from Captain John L. Woods, assistant quartermaster, St. Louis, Missouri, September 19; and another from same, October 3—making nine in all.

The only evidence of shipment is a bill of lading from Brevet Brigadier General Potter, dated Nebraska City, August 4, which covers about two-thirds of the amount of these invoices. If this shipment travels at the same rate as that of June 15, (103 days,) it ought to

reach here by November 15. But shipments on the last four invoices, it is evident, will not reach here at all, as the marching time will throw their arrival in this region far into December or January. It will probably be the same as with the clothing last year—the trains reached a point somewhere near Fort Halleck, and put up there for the winter, as it was impracticable to push through the mountains so late in the season; in the spring they set out again, and early in the summer arrived here. Fortunately the troops did not suffer, as the force had been decreased by muster-out; but had their old number been maintained here the post would have been badly short of winter clothing, and their complaints embarrassing. We have already had two feet of snow at Fort Bridger this fall, and travel has mainly ceased for the season. Still, the shipment of August 4 will probably arrive here safe, and will, perhaps, half supply the post: the balance will have to be purchased in Salt Lake city at rates already intimated, so far as dealers here can furnish them. What they cannot furnish, the post will have to do without.

I think the facts here stated reflect on the department, and somebody seems to blame. If Major Grimes's estimates left here April 28, they must have reached Fort Laramie, Leavenworth, and St. Louis surely by May 10 or 12. If so, the supplies should have been shipped from Fort Leavenworth or Nebraska City not later than July 1, at the furthest, and there is no excuse for their delay an hour later. To invoice them September 18, October 3, &c., is simply preposterous, if they are expected to get here this season, and I am at a loss to understand such delays. I regret to report these facts, but they strike me as very reprehensible, and the officer or officers at fault should be called to quick account. Hereafter, I recommend that all supplies for this post, coming from the east, be shipped from the Missouri not later than July 1, and that no trains be allowed to leave after August 1. There is no certainty of their arrival if they leave after the latter date, and the department cannot afford to deal with uncertainties. There is a large excess of unserviceable harness here, as also of wagons; but they are well cared for, and might as well remain for current use and issue. There is also a number of old and unserviceable wagons; but they will bring scarcely anything here, if sold, and I recommend instead that they be broken up and used to repair other wagons, &c., from time to time, as needed. The iron and hard wood about them are both valuable, for various purposes, and none of either can be had here, except by importation from the east.

V.—RAIL, RIVER, AND WAGON TRANSPORTATION.

The post is supplied with about everything on contract—supplies delivered here. Fuel, forage, lumber, fresh beef, flour, &c. are purchased here on contract; but the bulk of everything else comes from the Missouri by wagon train. This seems inevitable this year; but, as recommended at length in my report on Fort Leavenworth, I think the system should be changed early next year, and supplies turned over to the transportation contractors from the end of the railroad, by means of shifting depots, the same as on military railroads during the war. This is what all private parties in this region are expecting to do, so as to shorten the distance of wagon transportation, and ordinarily private enterprise is a safe guide for the public service. The results would certainly be a saving of many thousands, if not millions of dollars. The contractor now on this route is Mr. Caldwell, and here, as elsewhere, I hear only good accounts of him. Such of his trains as have arrived here are reported in fine condition, and both Major Grimes and Colonel Lewis join in commending him. His rates average about eighteen cents a pound here, which is considered reasonable. Merchants in the valley here are paying from twelve to twenty cents per pound, as they inform me, and they regard Mr. Caldwell's contract as only a living one, in view of his getting his pay in vouchers, &c.

As intimated in my report on Fort Bridger, I have looked into the question of supplying this post from the Pacific rather than from the east, and am surprised that something of the kind has not been attempted ere this. The facts I have collected strike me as very significant, and I beg to state them as follows: The distance from here to the Missouri is variously computed as from 1,100 miles to 1,200 miles. The distance to San Francisco by the usually travelled route is put down at about 550 to 900 miles. This, however, is the stage route, and has not been used much for heavy freight, because of snow on the mountains during the winter, &c. The usual freight route is down the coast by water to Los Angeles, and thence by San Bernardino and the old Spanish trail to Salt Lake city. This route gives about 800 miles of land travel, over a desert road, with insufficient wood, water, grass, &c., but it has this important advantage, that it is free from snow all the year round.

Another route has been proposed *via* the Columbia and Snake rivers, through Idaho by Boise City, &c.; but the land travel by this would foot up some 700 miles, and the route has the disadvantage of bad snows for nearly half the year. A fourth route is the one now chiefly in vogue here, and is exciting much attention in this region. It is free from snow the year round, and has undoubted advantages over all others of very great importance, as it seems to me, and I think the government should be quick to avail itself of them. This route runs almost due south (a little west) from here, striking the Colorado river at a point named Callville, somewhat northeast from the junction of the 36th parallel of latitude with the 35th meridian of longitude. The distance from Great Salt Lake city to Callville is put

down at 410 miles. The road runs through 42 villages and towns, extending most of the way, that contain in all some 30,000 inhabitants. These people are chiefly Mormons, engaged in the cultivation of cotton, and are reported as succeeding well. In some places the road is somewhat sandy, and there are two or three marches of 20 to 30 miles without water, it is said. But the route has proven entirely practicable, teams passing over it with ease, and finding abundance of wood, water, grass, &c. On the lower part of the route are mines of gold, silver, salt, gypsum, &c., some of which, as the Palranagat mines, are already being worked considerably. A stage runs from Salt Lake semi-weekly over about two-thirds of the route now. At Callville the Colorado gives you from two to five feet of water the year round down to its mouth, and thence to the Gulf of California, a distance of some 600 miles. The only obstacle to navigation up to Callville is what is called Roaring Rapids, a point 28 miles below, where the Colorado makes a descent of four feet in 120 yards; but a steamboat came up this at low water this year, by means of a steam capstan, in less than ten minutes, and the entrance to and exit from the rapids are so easy that no real difficulty exists here. Another point, 35 miles below Callville, named Explorer's Rock, has been considered impassable, because Lieutenant Ives struck here when ascending the Colorado some years ago in his little iron boat called the Explorer, and thereupon turned back. But recent and fuller explorations have proven Lieutenant Ives in error in many respects as here. Early last month the Esmeralda, a small steamboat of 75 tons burden, 116 feet long, and drawing some two feet of water, commanded by Captain Thomas E. Trueworthy, of San Francisco, California, ascended readily to Callville, towing at the same time a barge 124 feet long, and of corresponding breadth, loaded down with freight. Lieutenant Ives's boat, the Explorer, was but 54 feet long. The rock where she struck was found to be near the middle of the river, and a depth of from six to ten feet was found on each side of it, 100 feet in width on each side, with a current not exceeding two miles an hour. This at ordinarily low water. It is believed that the Colorado is navigable for small boats with barges in tow at least 100 or 150 miles further up above Callville, and that a point may thus be reached not over 350 miles from Great Salt Lake city at the furthest. The bugbear of the Colorado, just above Callville, is what is called the Black cañon, where the river runs for some 10 or 15 miles between perpendicular walls of rock from 500 to 1,000 feet high. To explore this a gentleman travelled to the head of it a few months ago, and building himself a rude raft, navigated the cañon in safety to Callville. He reported the Colorado above the cañon to be an open country for 40 or 50 miles, and that it is a mistake to suppose that the river is necessarily rapid and impracticable because of its high walls. His experience was to the contrary.

From Callville to the mouth of the Colorado I have given as six hundred miles. Some one hundred and sixty miles down you strike Fort Mohave, and some three hundred and forty-four miles lower Fort Yuma, which is reported as one hundred and fifty miles from the mouth of the river. At the mouth of the river a good harbor has recently been discovered where none was supposed formerly to exist. This was found accidentally by Captain Trueworthy, in 1864. It consists in fact of a second mouth of the Colorado, not down on any of the maps, which branches off some eighty miles up, and which empties into the gulf in such a way as to afford secure shelter from the terrible "borers" of the gulf. It is from fifty to eighty yards broad, and with perpendicular banks of hard clay some twenty-five feet high at low tide. At high tide the banks overflow a few inches, but the anchorage remains good. Some six miles up there is an abrupt fall extending across the stream, some four or five feet high at low water, but at high tide this disappears.

The depth of water in this singular harbor, at low tide, is given to me as from fifteen to twenty-five feet. This harbor is now used almost exclusively by the vessels in the Colorado trade. Their cargoes are here transferred to the small river boats and barges, and they here receive their outward-bound freights. There are now five steamboats constantly plying on the Colorado, and each has several barges. Last year there were but two. Boats now run up to Forts Yuma and Mohave, and they put freight down there from San Francisco, for merchants, miners, &c., at three and four cents per pound in gold respectively. I am told here that parties offer to put freight down at Callville for five cents per pound in gold, and that it can be transported from there here at not exceeding five cents in gold, making ten cents per pound in gold delivered here. Ten cents in gold would be about fourteen cents in currency, with gold at present rates, whereas our present contract price here from the east is about eighteen cents per pound. But I do not think this estimate even fair. The route is scarcely yet open; no encouragement has been given to its projectors worth naming, and all business here, as yet, streams eastward. California, with great blindness to her own interests, as it seems to me, appears to have made no effort to secure the vast trade of this region, and her gold basis repels people that would otherwise gladly deal with her. Merchants here tell me that they have attempted to trade with the Pacific, and have no doubt that they could do better there than by going east. But no routes have been opened, and no trade or travel sought, whereas the east has put forth extra efforts to hold on to them. The only route in use has been that by Los Angeles, San Bernardino, &c., over which the freight charges are now from twenty to thirty cents per pound in gold. With almost one accord they endorse this new route, via Callville, and predict for it complete success in the end. But the route must be stocked and started by somebody. As yet it is in embryo. Let the government

take hold of it and use it for only a year or two, and that will set trade and travel for Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, &c., that way, and this will soon cut the transportation rates down one-third or one-half I am satisfied. Of course all depends on what rates stores can be put down at the mouth of the Colorado for. But it strikes me that we can ship from New York direct, and so up the Colorado to Callville, without going to California at all, much cheaper than by the present route. A study of the map of the distances demonstrates, I think, that ultimately commerce will choose this new route in preference to all others for access to this great internal basin of the continent, and I am surprised that it has not been opened up sooner; for history shows that trade, heavy freights, &c., will never strike land so long as water can be made available. Of course the true plan, as on our shallow western rivers, is to use light-draught boats, with barges in tow; and this is the plan recently adopted on the Colorado.

In connection with this subject I called on Mr. Brigham Young, and other dignitaries of the Mormon church here. Mr. Young said that he had long been convinced of the practicability and advisability of the route, and had been "preaching" it for ten years past, but that California had taken no pains to open it, and that his people as yet were wedded to their eastern connections. He admitted many facts relating to it that I inquired of him about, but did not seem disposed to give me any fresh information. He denied having any maps of the region, and impressed me as quite satisfied with present routes, evidently believing that with the opening of this new, short, and, at all seasons of the year, practicable route, there would be an influx of Gentiles, miners, &c., into this region, that would be injurious to his "peculiar institutions."

Governor Durkee, Judges Titus, Drake, and others here of character and standing as federal officers, all indorsed the new route, and wished it speedy success, as a sure method of introducing and maintaining Gentile supremacy here.

The facts as to this route I have derived from a variety of sources after much inquiry, and I think they may be relied upon. One of my chief informants has been a Mr. Samuel Adams, formerly a Pennsylvanian, but now a lawyer in Arizona. For two years past he has given his entire attention to the opening of this route, and has spent considerable means in doing so. I chanced upon him here a day or two ago, just from Callville, and have found his information corroborated by what I have heard from others. He hears letters from Governor Low, of California, and others, indorsing his character, &c., and has impressed me as a truthful, reliable gentleman. He says that two corporations are now fighting for the trade of the Colorado, one the Pacific and Colorado Navigation Company, and the other the Colorado Navigation Company, which he asserts is only a branch of the great Combination Navigation Company of California, a corporation that controls all the navigable waters of that State. This Combination or Colorado Company, he says, deny the practicability of navigating the Colorado above Fort Mohave, and have asked Congress for an appropriation of \$150,000 to remove obstructions in the river. He says the Pacific and Colorado Navigation Company, by the recent and successful trips of the Esmeralda to Callville during low water, have demonstrated that there are no serious obstructions in the river, and he offers to remove them all for less than \$2,000. Of course, San Francisco capital mainly controls the rival Colorado (or Combination) company, and a glance at the map will show that her interests are opposed to the opening of the Colorado unless she controls its trade.

If the Colorado can be navigated, and the country depending on it thus opened up to settlement and commerce, a new city is sure to spring up at the head of the Gulf of California, or somewhere about there, that will communicate direct with the outside world, and thus prove a bold rival to San Francisco. I deem it proper to suggest this, that you may be able to give due weight to such opposing views as may reach you from the Pacific. I am firmly of the opinion that the government has grave interests now lying locked up by our ignorance of the Colorado, and that we have few more important matters than this now before us. Unseal the Colorado and you open Arizona, develop Utah, aid Nevada, help Idaho and Montana, and overwhelm forever, by peaceful means too, our other "twin relic of barbarism," that yet finds a refuge from Christianity and civilization in the fastnesses of these mountains and valleys. I can learn but little here of what is called the Great cañon of the Colorado. Mr. Adams thinks it somewhat of a myth, like so many other things he has heard about the river. At Denver and at Fort Garland they gave me an account of it, as beginning just above Callville, and extending some two hundred miles up the river, with perpendicular walls of rock from two thousand to three thousand feet high, between which the water rushed in rapids and cascades the whole length.

As already stated, Mr. Adams penetrated the foot of it, the fearful Black cañon, and found the first fifty or seventy-five miles of it a delusion. He has never been higher up than that, but thinks the balance about the same, from what he could learn from the Indians. If this cañon be navigable, or if it can be circumvented by portages, &c., advantages almost incalculable will result to the regions further up. There is a vast region there, as yet almost untrodden by the white man, which, I am informed by General Kit Carson and other old trappers who have passed through it, is unsurpassed in agricultural and mineral resources. The Silver mountains, or Sierra de la Plata, run it on one side, and abound in gold, silver, copper, lead, &c. It is watered chiefly by the San Juan, Grand, and Green rivers, which unite to form the Colorado. These rivers, all large, take their rise in the Rocky, Silver, and

Wahsatch mountains, and drain Pacific-wards a vast section of country. Kit Carson says that at their junction the Colorado is a river of from five to ten feet in depth, according to the season, and that the San Juan, Grand, and Green rivers run, with from three to five feet, hundreds of miles further up still. I myself observed in crossing Green river, some eighty miles east of Fort Bridger, that even away up there, at this dry season of the year, we had some three feet of water at the ford. During high water I was told that the stream ran five and six feet deep, and had to be crossed by a ferry. Hence, I think it safe to conclude that great results depend upon the opening of the Colorado, and that the government should aid in the matter as far as it can consistently. It is of importance, it will be seen, not only to the Territories already mentioned, but to western Colorado and this vast secluded region of which the world as yet knows so little. Should I continue in the service, I would like no better duty than to be ordered to ascend the Colorado, from its mouth upwards, and explore all these rivers to the head of navigation. I am convinced that great results depend upon their full and complete exploration, and I would urge these views on the attention of the department with all the force I am capable of.

In conclusion, I beg leave to recommend that proposals be invited for supplying Camp Douglas and Fort Bridger by this Callville route next season, and that they be accepted if the rates be not greater than by other routes. Advertisements should be made, of course, in the Utah, Arizona, and California papers; and should the project fail next year, the department may rest assured that it will succeed in the end. Even with the Pacific railroad here, Callville and the Colorado will be the true route for heavy freights, and it is only a question of time how soon commerce will fall into its natural and best route here, instead of continuing on in artificial channels. A railroad to the Colorado will strike navigation 400 miles from here at the furthest, and the Pacific railroad cannot reach navigation much under 1,000, either east or west, to do its best. These facts, it seems to me, settle the question, or will settle it in time. Herewith I give a rough map, which shows the Callville route and the facts connected with it with more precision than any other map I have been able to find.

VI.—REGULAR SUPPLIES—FUEL, FORAGE, LUMBER, ETC.

(a) *Fuel*.—Wood is used mostly for fuel, though some coal is issued to officers. Wood on hand consists of 1,742 cords, and more was being delivered to make up the winter's supply. This wood is a fair article for this region, and consists principally of pine, cedar, and quaking aspen. It comes from canyons thirty to seventy-five miles away, and costs delivered here \$13 65 per cord. The price is reasonable; the cost last year was \$22 50 per cord. The coal on hand, some 71½ tons, was all procured last year, and cost delivered here \$45 per ton. None has been purchased this year, but Major Grimes thinks he could have secured all he wanted at not exceeding \$30 per ton. The article is indifferent, of a soft, bituminous character, with much sulphur. Exposed to the air it flakes like lime, and falls greatly to pieces; yet it burns with a good flame, and consumes entirely to ashes, leaving no scoria or clinkers behind. The coal on hand came from a mine in Weber valley, some forty-five miles east from here. Great Salt Lake city supplies itself from there, and no reliable mines are known any nearer. Coal, however, is believed to exist in the bluffs east and north of Camp Douglas, and I myself am of this opinion. The garrison last year ran a drift into one of the bluffs one-half mile or so north of the post, and though they found plenty of black, coal-bearing shales, slate, &c., could strike no coal. Up Emigration cañon, two or three miles from here, they also sunk a shaft, but with no satisfactory results. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that good coal occurs quite near here, and I have impressed upon Major Grimes the importance of seeking for it as soon as more important work now on hand is over. Wood will constantly grow dearer here, because of the scarcity of it and the constantly increasing population, and coal should be resorted to as soon as practicable. Even now it would be good economy, I think, to equip the post with stoves. Stoves would make the quarters and barracks far more comfortable than the present wide, open fireplaces, and the difference in fuel consumed would more than pay for them the first season. The calculation is so plain that I forbear to make it.

(b) *Forage*.—Grain on hand consists of 1,042 bushels of oats, and 1,605 bushels of barley. The supply cost 79 cents per bushel for oats and \$1 30 for barley, delivered here. Hay on hand consists of about 59 tons, costs \$35 per ton delivered here, and the quality is excellent; no better need be wanted. Last year the quartermaster here, Captain Stover, assistant quartermaster volunteers, paid \$3 50 per bushel for his grain, and \$40 per ton for his hay.

(c) *Lumber*.—The lumber now being used here cost \$60 per thousand, delivered here, and the shingles \$10 to \$13. The quality is good. Last year we paid \$120 to \$130 per thousand for lumber, and for shingles from \$15 to \$20.

The difference in all these contract prices is so great that while I allow for a general reduction in prices since the close of the war, I must, nevertheless, call your attention to them as reflecting much credit on the present quartermaster here, Major Grimes. They demonstrate his business capacity, and speak more for his integrity and energy than any mere words can do. He should be remembered accordingly.

I think it very important, as a matter of economy, that the post continue to supply itself from this valley as far as practicable.

The subsistence department also, I beg to say, would find it greatly to its advantage to

purchase many articles here, such as beef, flour, and all kinds of vegetables, some of which it is now shipping here from the east at a heavy cost to the quartermaster's department. Beans, peas, onions, and potatoes especially are all produced here of the finest quality, and at a cost scarcely, if any, greater than that on the Missouri. So far as our department is concerned, I beg to recommend that we ship nothing here that the Territory itself can supply as cheaply. The reasons are obvious.

VII.—RESERVATION, POST, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, ETC.

The reservation here was originally established October 26, 1862, by Brigadier General Connor, United States volunteers, then in command here. As then defined it was two miles square. December 23, same year, he extended it to four miles square; for what reason is not known. I cannot ascertain that it has been officially declared a reservation by the President, but presume it has. No map of the reservation exists here; but General Easton has two draughtsmen *en route* here, who are expected weekly, and a map will be forwarded you when they complete their work here. The bounds of the reservation, as pointed out to me, run down within a mile or so of Great Salt Lake city, and a portion of it is supposed to be covered by the present corporation limits of the city. East the reservation takes in the high bluffs, just back of the post, and runs south almost to Parley's cañon, the main road into Great Salt Lake city.

The post is located in the northwest corner of the reservation, and embraces some ten or twelve acres. It stands at the foot of the high bluffs that form the eastern boundary of the valley, and occupies an elevated plateau that overlooks and commands Great Salt Lake city. A never-failing stream of water, that issues from a considerable cañon just back of the post, is led by acequias all about the post and irrigates it thoroughly. Water flows everywhere, by the quarters, barracks, storehouses, stables, around the parade ground, &c., and will ultimately make the post one of the most beautiful in the country. Shade trees have already been planted out to some extent, and are growing luxuriantly. The post is laid out for a ten-company post, but the buildings are too close and will not suffice well for more than five; it is, however, susceptible of enlargement, there being plenty of ground yet unoccupied. Some of the buildings are of adobe with shingle roofs and board floors; but most of them are of logs chinked on the outside. These last are all comfortable buildings; but many of the barracks have been hastily constructed, and not being properly tied inside, are now bulging out with a tendency to topple down. Some of these have recently been well braced with iron rods, &c., but they are organically faulty, and will soon have to be pulled down and rebuilt. The present garrison of three small companies, of course, occupy but a part of these buildings, and get along very well. These buildings were all erected in the summer and fall of 1863, by the troops then here, their first winter being passed in tents. They were placed on the top of the ground, and the frost lifts and drops them somewhat. Still I did not observe any serious results from the frost where the buildings had been properly constructed originally. All such will stand yet for years, and afford good shelter to the troops occupying them. Others, however, will have to be pulled down next season, and either reconstructed or removed.

The officers' quarters, on the east side of the parade-ground, front nearly due west. The men's barracks, on the north and south sides of the parade-ground, front the same way, with gable ends resting on the parade-ground.

In addition to these buildings, there is an old log storehouse somewhat north of the post, now filled with clothing, but not worth much for any purpose. Some of the empty barracks are now also used for storehouses, but this will soon cease. Major Grimes has just completed one fine frame storehouse, 100 feet long by 50 feet wide, and 14 feet high in the clear, that he is now using as a granary, and he has two more well under way, of the same dimensions, that he designs for quartermasters' stores, clothing, camp and garrison equipage, &c. A fourth, of the same dimensions, but with cellar underneath for the use of the subsistence department, he has also well begun.

All of these buildings will be completed by, say Christmas at the furthest, and these will give ample storage for all probable wants of the post. They will enable Major Grimes to vacate various unsuitable buildings that he is now compelled to occupy, and to arrange and systematize his stores better than he is now able to do. There are also two new stables just completed here, of frame, each of which will accommodate fifty-two animals. The balance of the animals are sheltered indifferently, in a poor corral, and more stabling, or a corral with good sheds, will be required here, should the animals on hand not be reduced next spring. All of these buildings, except the subsistence storehouse, stand in a row south of the post, off by themselves, and it is to be regretted that the subsistence storehouse was not located in the same row. It has, however, been begun near the southwest corner of the parade-ground, with its gable end resting on the parade-ground, and is already so far advanced that I have not felt at liberty to stop it. A stream of water now runs down one side of this row of buildings, but a few yards off, and it is intended to lead another down the other side as soon as they are completed, as precautions against fires, &c. There is a good hospital here, capable of accommodating forty patients, and plenty of vacant buildings that would do for a chapel, though there is no chapel proper here.

A map of the post, with full drawings, &c., as provided by existing orders, I found in the

office of the post quartermaster, and a copy was forwarded to you through General Easton, August 31, as Major Grimes informs me. A report as to the number, dimensions, and present use of all buildings at the post you will also find herewith. The new buildings now going up are all being erected by authority of the Secretary of War, and reflect much credit on the quartermaster here.

Should it be intended to maintain the post permanently, it would be well to rebuild it soon of stone throughout, rather than patch it up from time to time with costly lumber, &c. There is an excellent quality of fine red sandstone, well adapted for building purposes, in the bluffs back of the post, on the reservation, not over a mile and a half or two miles from the flag-staff, and the supply is inexhaustible. The bluffs there are all apparently filled with it. This stone is thrown out by crow-bars, without the use of powder even, and is readily worked into a very beautiful material. Lime can be had here cheap. Gypsum is found but a few miles off, and I doubt much whether the first cost of rebuilding with this stone would exceed much, if any, the cost of rebuilding with lumber. Its greater economy in the long run is too obvious to need mentioning. Major Grimes is of the opinion that he could have built his storehouses quite as cheap of this stone as he could of lumber, but it would have taken more time, and the buildings were needed immediately. As to the reservation, I think it unduly large, and recommend its reduction to not exceeding two miles square without delay. No use is made of the outlying land, and its retention will only serve as an unnecessary source of irritation here. The two miles square will embrace all the water, stone, expected coal mines, &c., that the post needs, and will keep population away as well as ten, in view of the present location of the post, near the northwest corner of the reservation and within three miles of the heart of Great Salt Lake city. I think the policy of large reservations a mistaken one; they only serve to impede settlements and raise the price of supplies, whereas the government, I take it, is desirous of securing just contrary results.

There is a government reservation some forty miles southwest from here, in Rush valley. It is six miles square, has several log and adobe buildings on it and some seven or eight miles of pale fence. I can find no map of it, nor can I learn whether it has been officially declared a reservation. It was laid out in 1857, by Colonel Steptoe, for grass and hay purposes, but is of no account now in connection with this post, as both can be had cheaper here. The grass land there consists of about one hundred and sixty acres of swampy land, that will cut about half a ton to the acre. For grazing purposes there is more, but only during the spring and early summer, as later the grass there dries up. I see no use for retaining this reservation, and recommend that it be abandoned, after selling the houses, fences, &c., if possible. I am also told that there is a reservation, four miles square, at old Camp Floyd, some twenty-six miles southeast from Rush valley. This also I recommend to be abandoned. One man, on pay of \$15 per month and rations, is now on duty at Rush valley, looking after government property there, who might be relieved and his wages saved were the reservation there abandoned.

VIII.—EMPLOYÉS.

The roll of employés foots up one hundred and fifty-one men, at a total monthly cost of \$4,830, rations and quarters not included, both of which are allowed.

This large force has been necessitated by the new buildings going up here; but Major Grimes thinks that the work will be chiefly over by November 30, when he can reduce his employés to forty men. He is mistaken, I think, about the time. His buildings will not be completed much, if any, before Christmas, and when that is done he ought to reduce below forty employés. The garrison ought to and can supply what laborers and teamsters may be necessary through the winter, (all supplies being delivered here,) and a couple of carpenters and blacksmiths each ought to suffice for his mechanics. So his clerks should be reduced to one, and one man ought to do for storekeeper, forage-master, &c., as soon as his force is reduced. I think from twenty to twenty-five men at the furthest, including his fifteen herders now absent at Henry's fork with the surplus mules, ought to suffice for Camp Douglas as soon as this fall work is over, and I recommend the employés to be reduced accordingly.

IX.—CEMETERY.

The cemetery is located about half a mile south of the post, on a fine plateau, and is the most creditable of any that I have seen from Leavenworth here. It contains about one acre, and is surrounded by a substantial wall of red sandstone, some four and a half feet high. An irrigating ditch courses around inside of the wall and supplies water to a variety of trees and shrubbery, all of which are growing nicely. The interments, ninety seven in all, have been made systematically, and neat head-boards have been erected to the graves, as provided by existing orders. Some of the graves are marked by substantial red sandstone head-stones, put up by surviving comrades, and very nicely carved. In the centre stands a lofty and most creditable monument of red sandstone, erected by former troops here (California volunteers) in memory of their comrades—officers and soldiers—who fell at Bear river and other points during the rebellion, fighting Indians. The top of this monument is crowned by the statue of an officer, and various military emblems, inscriptions, &c., adorn its sides. The

work was done by the enlisted men, and cost the government nothing except the use of tools. A very full and complete mortuary record relating to the cemetery is kept by Major Grimes, and I have been gratified by the interest he has shown in the premises.

X.—FIRE DEPARTMENT.

The fire department here amounts to nothing, nor does much seem necessary, water is so universal and so abundant. Nevertheless I thought it best to direct Major Grimes to place buckets of water through his important warehouses for immediate use in case of fire. I do not think anything more necessary. The post is as safe in this respect as it can well be made, and for the rest we must trust to Providence.

XI.—ACCOUNTS.

The accounts of Major Grimes had been rendered for September, and in the main were correct. Some minor errors I noted and called his attention to them. His cash on hand October 31 was \$7,866 77, of which \$7,539 72 was deposited with United States treasury in New York city, and balance in his safe for current use. That in safe I counted and found correct. He complains, I think justly, of the manner in which funds have been recently sent to him. Instead of depositing in St. Louis or New York to his credit, and notifying him of that fact by telegraph, so as to save time, checks have been sent him by mail on New York, which at present are not of the slightest use to him here. These checks he has to return to New York by mail and deposit there so as to check on them, so that altogether he loses more than a month in time by the operation. The truth is he ought to be either furnished with currency or allowed to deposit in the national bank here, (Miners' First National Bank,) and I so recommend. By this means he would be able to transact business quicker and purchase cheaper, and I see no reason why this change should not be made. Drafts on the east are now at a discount here instead of a premium; and this often happens in Great Salt Lake city, as I am informed.

I would also call your attention to the comparatively heavy indebtedness of the post. This Major Grimes gives me, October 31st, as \$76,208 82. His total indebtedness since August 1st he gives as \$116,208 82, for all which he has duly estimated. On his estimates, however, he has only received \$40,000, to wit: August 10th, \$10,000, and September 15th, \$30,000, leaving a deficit of \$76,208 82 as above, to date. I think this should be remedied without delay, and recommend that the proper officer be directed to place sufficient funds at once to his credit to extinguish this indebtedness, and that the post be kept well supplied hereafter. Economy, as well as its good name, requires that the government should pay promptly, and I see no reason why we should not do so while the condition of the treasury continues so healthy, if its monthly statements are to be credited.

XII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

I. Major Grimes's file of general orders from your office is the fullest that I have found for a long time, and he seems to appreciate the importance of having them.

II. In my report on Fort Bridger, page 10, I speak of the shortness of grain there, and say I will see about this on my arrival here. I spoke to Major Grimes about it immediately on my arrival here, October 14th, and he at once saw the contractor, who assured him that with a little extension of time, the post would certainly be supplied. As I was taken sick, I thought no more of it, and concluded Bridger was all right; but November 3d, when preparing this report, I inquired about the matter again, and found that out of 13,800 bushels contracted for, only 3,856 $\frac{1}{2}$ bushels had been delivered, leaving a deficit of 9,943 $\frac{1}{2}$ bushels, although the contract time for delivery expired October 15th. This was not satisfactory, and I so informed Major Grimes by letter of November 3d, and directed him to take whatever other steps might be necessary to insure a full supply of grain at Fort Bridger, without fail, before winter sets in. The contractor pleads that the recent heavy snow-storm among the mountains embarrassed him; but be that as it may, Bridger must not be left short. I have called Major Grimes's attention sharply to the matter, and do not apprehend that the department need feel anxious about it hereafter. The whole supply contracted for will scarcely be needed, as over one hundred of the animals there have recently been sent to Henry's fork to winter along with the surplus animals here, as stated on page 56.

III. I think the present policy here as to contracts bad, and would recommend an entire change. In the absence of instructions, Major Grimes has adopted the same policy here as prevails elsewhere, namely, to accept the lowest bids and make his contracts accordingly. I do not see as he could do otherwise; but is not the policy a suicidal one for the government here among these Mormons? Of course, with their peculiar organization and advantages they can well afford to take all the contracts at a figure lower than the outside Gentile population. It is to their direct interest to do so, because all such business strengthens the church, while at the same time it proportionally weakens Gentiledom. The total contracts here and at Fort Bridger for the current year, of both the quartermaster and commissary of subsistence departments, will not fall much, if any, short of \$450,000; the profits on this I apprehend will foot up \$50,000, judging by what contractors usually make. If this falls to Mormon

contractors, of course a tenth of the profits, or \$5,000, goes directly into the pockets of Mr Brigham Young, or the "Church of Latter Day Saints," as he facetiously calls it. In other words, the United States pays into the hands of its open and avowed foes \$5,000, and into the hands of complete subjects of its foes \$15,000 more. On the contrary, if this amount had gone into the hands of Gentile contractors, it would fairly represent say fifty families, and would have strengthened by that much the loyal population here. The population of the valley is now variously represented at from seventy-five thousand to one hundred thousand souls, of which between two thousand and three thousand only are Gentiles. These last are unconditionally and unequivocally loyal to the core; while the great bulk of the Mormon population are openly and avowedly hostile, and hoastingly live in open defiance of the laws of the United States, which the federal courts here are powerless to enforce. This condition of things gets no better, but rather worse here from year to year, and it is evidently only a question of time how soon the United States will vindicate its authority and dignity, or else will adopt a policy which, by encouraging and strengthening Gentileism, will gradually and peacefully neutralize and overcome Mormonism. As a step in this direction, I recommend that no Mormon be allowed to receive a contract from the quartermaster's department, but that all such patronage be held for Gentiles. Major Grimes informs me that such a policy would probably have cost the government here this year, say \$5,000 more than by letting contracts to the lowest bidders as he has. Suppose it had. Would not that have been a cheap premium for the encouragement and increase of a loyal population here? And had not the United States better have paid that for such a purpose than to put an equal sum of \$5,000 in the hands of Brigham Young as it has? I forbear to discuss this subject further, but make these suggestions for the consideration of the department, for I think the garrison here should either be largely increased or withdrawn altogether. It is in the same condition that Major Anderson was in Fort Sumter, in April, 1861; it is too small for effective use, and only serves as an insult and irritation to the people here. To effectually overawe and control these malcontents, will require two regiments of infantry, a squadron of cavalry, and a battery of artillery. They, themselves, have a militia organization in this county alone, that foots up fifteen hundred men, of whom one-third are cavalry, and a battery of howitzers besides. I attended their annual muster last week, and saw them for myself. This organization does not report to the territorial governor, but carries the flag of the old Nauvoo Legion, and that of the "State of Deseret," as well as the United States standard, and reports only to Lieutenant General Wells, a high Mormon dignitary and creature of Brigham Young. Similar organizations exist in all the other counties, though the one here is of course the largest. Governor Durkee tells me that he has tried to get hold of this militia, or to disband it, as hostile to the territorial and federal governments, but has utterly failed to touch it. Brigham Young's word is law and gospel here, and he is governor *de facto*, no matter whom the President may send here *de jure*. Before this force our petty garrison here, of less than two hundred men, is of course powerless, and is the derision of the Mormons. They are content to feed and supply it so long as they can make money and exclude Gentiles from contracts. But it could not stand a day against their fanatical thousands, if Brigham Young saw fit to launch them upon it. As a consequence, Gentiles are robbed, driven off, and even killed with impunity, as witness the case of Dr. Robinson here, October 22, while I lay sick. His offence was that he had "squatted" on a piece of ground entirely unoccupied, without improvements, some three miles from the heart of Great Salt Lake city, but to which the city nevertheless laid a claim. A force of police was sent to tear down his house and warn him from the premises. He made no resistance, but quietly removed into the city and began a suit before the federal courts to test his right of pre-emption. He had not a personal enemy. He had formerly been in the volunteer service here, and been honorably mustered out. He was a sober, quiet, upright man, and even popular, because of his services to the poor. Yet, soon after his suit was commenced, he was summoned from his bed near midnight, on the pretence that a mule had fallen on a man and broke the man's leg; and as he went forth on his errand of mercy and benevolence, he was waylaid by eight men, knocked down, and then shot through the head two or three times, so as to make sure of their victim. His watch, purse, &c., were left unmolested in his pockets. The police made no effort to discover his murderers. And the universal conviction of all federal officers here, governor, judges, &c., and of the great bulk of the Gentile population, is, that Dr. Robinson was deliberately killed by the Mormons, because they were afraid to abide the decision of the courts. True the city has offered a reward of \$2,000 for the apprehension of his assassins, and Mormon and Gentile merchants some \$7,000 more. But this trick deceives nobody here, and is only meant to "throw dust into the eyes" of Lieutenant General Sherman and people east. I give this as only one illustration of what is constantly occurring here in some form or other, and hence I say our present garrison is only a mockery of power. I recommend its speedy increase to the figures heretofore given, and that ample protection be given to all American citizens here the same as in New York and Massachusetts. Wherever the flag floats we are entitled to freedom of speech, and of the press; and neither exists here now. If the United States government cannot guarantee them, in spite of a hundred thousand polygamous, disloyal Mormons, then it seems to me it had better abdicate and make way for some other decent, Christian government that can and will.

RECAPITULATION.

I. I commend Major Grimes as a faithful and efficient officer, and recommend his retention here for the present.

II. I recommend the animals on hand to be largely reduced next spring, by sale or transfer, according to the exigencies of the department.

III. I recommend the large excess of clothing, &c., here, to be retained for current use and issue; well stored.

IV. I recommend that supplies for Fort Bridger and Camp Douglas leave the Missouri hereafter not later than August 1, at the furthest; otherwise, there is no certainty of their reaching here till next season.

V. I recommend that proposals be invited for supplying Fort Bridger and Camp Douglas hereafter from the Pacific *via* the Colorado river and Callville.

VI. I recommend the use of stores here hereafter as a matter of economy in fuel.

VII. I recommend that Fort Bridger and Camp Douglas be supplied, as far as possible, with current products of this Territory, because far cheaper.

VIII. In case the post be rebuilt and permanently held, I recommend that stone only be used; plenty on reservation within a mile or two.

IX. I recommend that the reservation be reduced to two miles square as a matter of policy, and that the reservations at Rush valley and Old Camp Floyd be abandoned.

X. I recommend the force of employes be reduced to not exceeding twenty or twenty-five, including herders, by December 31, garrison to furnish details for balance.

XI. I recommend that sufficient funds be sent Major Grimes to enable him to extinguish the indebtedness of the post, and to pay his debts right along hereafter. Also, that he be allowed to deposit in the national bank here for the purpose of expediting business.

XII. I recommend that no contracts be given out to Mormons hereafter; but that all such patronage be reserved for the Gentile friends of the government.

XIII. I recommend the garrison here to be increased by two regiments of infantry, a squadron of cavalry, and a battery of artillery, so as to give ample protection to all loyal American citizens.

Copies of orders issued while here are herewith, as also various reports showing the condition of affairs here in detail.

In conclusion, I am, general, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES F. RUSLING,

Brevet Brigadier General and Inspector Q. M. D.

P. S.—In my remarks on Callville, (pages 12, 30,) I have said nothing about Mexico, because I understand that, by the "Gadsden purchase," we secured the right to free navigation of the Colorado. Besides, I do not suppose her rights and dignities would stand much in the way of the United States in a matter of so much importance to us and the commerce of the world.

J. F. R.

A true copy:

JOHN V. FUREY,

Brevet Major and Assistant Quartermaster.

OFFICE INSPECTOR QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT,
Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, December 3, 1866.

GENERAL: I have the honor to report my arrival here, November 29th, from Camp Douglas, Washington Territory, via Fort Boise, Idaho Territory. My reasons for adopting this route are given in my personal report for November, and I trust are satisfactory.

While *en route* here, I inspected Fort Boise, and beg leave to submit the following report relating to the same. This post is situated in southwestern Idaho, on the great stage route from Salt Lake city to the Columbia river, a half mile or so northeast of Boise city, the capital of the Territory; distance from Salt Lake city, 400 miles; to the Columbia, at Umatilla, 270 miles. Its present military value is to protect this stage route and as a minor supply depot. As protection to the stage route, it has ceased to be of importance, because the route needs none, there being no Indians along the road or east of Snake river, (to speak of,) and Boise city and thereabouts having sufficient people to take care of themselves. As a supply depot, it is worse than useless, being of no account in any way except to increase bills of expense. At present, it is also headquarters of the district of Boise, embracing most of the region thereabouts. Its garrison consists of one company of the first cavalry and one of the fourteenth infantry, in all about one hundred and seventy men. The duty of the quartermaster's department at Fort Boise is to supply these and the dependencies of the depot, which are, respectively, Camp Lyon, sixty-five miles southwest, garrisoned by one company of cavalry; Camp Winthrop, at the Three Forks of the Owyhee, (near old Camp Henderson, abandoned,) one hundred and ten miles southwest, garrisoned by two companies

coin, delivered at the post. Last year's supply was bought in open market, and cost more, Captain Eckerson thinks; but his predecessor left him no data as to prices. A hay reserve of five hundred and three acres, three miles off, on the Boise river, furnished three hundred tons this season; this was cut by contract, and cost, stacked there, \$14 per ton. This reserve is fenced in and guarded, and seems to have paid for itself well. The supply of forage on hand is small; but a full supply has been contracted for, and is being delivered right along; it comes chiefly from Boise valley. I was unable to obtain any data as to the cost of fuel at the dependencies of Fort Boise; but Captain Eckerson thought they were all supplying themselves by the labor of the troops. As to forage, however, I took the following from his contracts: At Camp Lyon grain costs, delivered there, $10\frac{1}{2}$ cents per pound; hay, \$60 per ton. At Camp Winthrop, grain 20 cents per pound; hay, \$125 per ton. At Camp C. F. Smith, grain, $11\frac{7}{10}$ cents per pound; hay, \$47.95 per ton. At Camp Warner, grain, $31\frac{1}{2}$ cents per pound; hay cut by the troops. These prices, of course, are in coin, as greenbacks cease to be currency after you pass Salt Lake. I think all of these forage rates too high, and the difference in the prices at the dependencies not justified by the difference in distances. The contract at Camp Winthrop especially looks very singular compared with those at Lyon and Smith. An easy calculation will show that the cost of maintaining these four posts at such rates is enormous. Much of it, it is plain, comes from not selecting the Chico route to supply these posts; and I am unable to understand why this was not done if economy is desired. If there be two hundred animals at Camp Warner, including the cavalry there—and there are probably more—their grain alone, from November 1 to April 30, will cost \$135,360 in coin. I think if the district quartermaster, Captain Eckerson, had visited the posts in person, and studied their resources, he would have been able to make better contracts than these, and I am unable to acquit the department quartermaster of his just share of blame. Why did he sanction contracts at such rates?

Lumber costs in the rough \$60 per thousand in coin, and shingles \$6. The same remarks as above I would repeat as to lumber.

VI.—RESERVATION, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, ETC.

There are properly three reservations at Fort Boise—first, the wood reserve, an island in Boise river, a mile south from the post, containing 343 acres; second, the hay reserve, some three miles northwest, on Boise river, 503 acres; and, 3d, the main reservation, about the post, containing 640 acres. The wood reserve might as well be thrown open to pre-emption, as the wood has all been cut off, and it is of no further use. The hay reserve gave us 300 tons of hay this year, about half the price of contract hay, and should be kept, if the post is maintained. The main reserve is one-half a mile north and south by two miles east and west, and runs quite down to Boise city, which is already pushing up to the reserve, as close as allowed to. It is quite as small as it should be, and I would not recommend its further reduction. The post is located southwest of the centre of the reservation, a half mile or so from the centre of Boise city, a town now of some 2,000 inhabitants. The buildings are intended for two companies. They are of a light sandstone, which abounds on the reservation. There is good frame stabling for about 100 animals, and a new cavalry stable (frame) is just being completed—capacity, 90 horses. The company quarters require new floors and some patching, but the general condition of the buildings is good. The storerooms are ample for present post and depot purposes, though one small one was burned down some months since.

A report on these buildings is herewith enclosed. A map with drawings of same is on file in the quartermaster's office, and I was informed copies had been sent to you by Lieutenant Tobey, 14th infantry, formerly quartermaster. The post was established in 1863 by Major Lugenebel, 19th infantry. A map of the same is on file in the quartermaster's office, obtained from one on file in your office, as appears by certificate of General Dana. There is no record at the post of the reservations having ever been officially declared, but this I judge has been done. The location of the post is bad; it is too near Boise city, and the ground itself is broken and irregular. The officers' quarters are on one plateau, the company quarters and parade ground on another several feet below, and the storerooms, shops, stables, &c., are jumbled together very singularly. The post is unenclosed, and the public road to Idaho city passes directly through it. The general effect of the post is bad, and this impression is not removed by a study of its military value.

In view of the facts, I repeat my recommendation that Fort Boise be abandoned, and recommend that the reservations be thrown open to pre-emption, and the public buildings turned over to the Interior Department, for use of the Territorial government. The territorial government has no buildings at Boise city now, and I understand is an applicant for these, in case the post is given up. They would suffice well for the purpose indicated, and the United States would at the same time save the cost of rent, or of erecting new buildings.

VII.—EMPLOYÉS.

The roll of employés foots up forty-two men, at a monthly cost of \$3,905. Rations and quarters are also allowed in the main. I think the number unusually large, and recommend the discharge of at least the acting forage master, whose work can be done by the wagon-

master or storekeeper, and of all the carpenters, except two; also of the six teamsters and two laborers, whose work should be done by detailed soldiers, as it is purely local. If the post is broken up, of course the whole expense will be saved. The "freighters" and "hired animals," entered on the report herewith, come under the head of transportation, which I have already noticed fully.

VIII.—CEMETERY.

There is a space of ground one-quarter of a mile northeast from the post where there are nine soldier interments and many citizens. As yet this is the common cemetery for Boise city also. It is unenclosed, and is no credit to the post in its present condition.

A report of these graves has been made to you, and Captain Eckerson intends to enclose a proper portion of the ground as soon as practicable. This, however, should have been done before, and head-boards erected, &c., as required by existing orders. If the post is abandoned the soldiers' graves should be enclosed by stone, for obvious reasons.

IX.—FIRE DEPARTMENT.

The post has no protection against fire, except a small stream on the south, which runs dry in summer. The nearest water then is the Boise river, three-fourths of a mile off.

I directed buckets and barrels of water to be placed in all the storehouses, &c.; but the post may be regarded as practically defenceless in case of fire.

A recent fire there destroyed one of the storehouses, though built of stone. I was unable to ascertain the loss of property, but it was not large.

X.—ACCOUNTS.

The accounts of Captain Eckerson had been rendered for September, and those for October were well under way. With slight exceptions they were correct. His cash on hand, November 17, consisted of \$87 90; counted and found correct.

Your attention, however, is called to his indebtedness, which, October 31, amounted to \$297,409; by December 31, judging by his contracts out, it will reach \$525,854. To off-set this he had notice of \$60,000 *en route* from Colonel Hodges, chief quartermaster, department of Columbia—a "drop in the bucket." Vouchers more than a year old are still afloat in the Boise market, and the selling price there is now twenty per cent. discount; at the dependencies the discount runs up to thirty and forty per cent. The effect of this is to discourage all small dealers, and to throw the government business wholly into the hands of men who can afford to float vouchers, but who, of course, charge the government back again with the cost of this on their next contracts. Besides, is not the fact disgraceful to the quartermaster's department in the present condition of the treasury? Of course the present high prices in the district of the Boise for all services and supplies have been caused largely by this state of our vouchers, and the quickest way to remedy the matter hereafter is to pay as we go. I do not see that Captain Eckerson is responsible for this, as he has made his estimates regularly, and has called attention to his heavy indebtedness, both present and accruing. But I think *somebody* is, and I recommend that funds be ordered to Boise at once, to extinguish everything, and keep matters paid up hereafter. It will avail but little to send checks, as drafts on New York and San Francisco are generally at a discount at Boise city. But if *currency* can be sent in proper quantities, so as to restore the credit of the quartermaster's department, we shall be able to supply all the posts there at a very great saving hereafter. Why cannot this be done, and the quartermaster's department thus be saved the fierce abuse that now assails throughout the district of the Boise? Why cannot we pay our debts promptly, as well as the subsistence and other departments?

XI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Captain Eckerson's file of general orders from your office was good, though not full. I instructed him to write for the ones still wanting.

RECAPITULATION.

I. I recommend that Fort Boise be broken up and abandoned, as no longer of any value, either as a post or depot.

II. I recommend Captain Eckerson, chief quartermaster, district of the Boise, as a good post quartermaster, but think him unsuited to handle a district or department.

III. I recommend that the surplus animals be sold at Boise city, at auction, early in the spring.

IV. I recommend that the dependencies of Fort Boise be supplied hereafter from San Francisco, California, by the Chico route. The result would be a saving of twenty-five per cent., if not more.

V. Should Fort Boise be maintained, I recommend that it be supplied with coal hereafter, as fuel, instead of wood, from a mine at Farewell Bend, on Snake river.

Jan. 19/807.

Letter from Sec. of War.
In answer to a Resolution of
the House
